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MORALITY BEFORE KNOWLEDGE

Unveiling gender bias through corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis: A study of Indonesian Islamic preaching

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study examines how religious narratives in Indonesia both challenge and reinforce societal beliefs about women. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), it identifies gender biases in women's roles and duties as constructed by prominent Indonesian Islamic preachers. **Methods:** The study combines qualitative and quantitative corpus-assisted CDA of 45,125 words transcribed from six Indonesian-language Islamic preaching videos on YouTube. Analysis draws on Fairclough's (1995) CDA model, Van Leeuwen's (2007) discursive legitimation strategies, and Bourdieu's (1991) symbolic violence framework, linking micro-level textual legitimation to macro-level reproduction of gendered symbolic violence. **Findings:** Islamic preaching legitimises patriarchal beliefs as divinely ordained obligations. Legitimation strategies normalise unequal gender norms and confine women's roles to the domestic and moral sphere. Symbolic violence, doxa, and habitus jointly normalise gender inequality without overt coercion, embedding subordination as natural, virtuous, and spiritually rewarding. **Conclusion:** Religious preaching can function as a discursive mechanism sustaining patriarchal control, contrary to Indonesia's gender equality agenda, and calls for more egalitarian readings of Islamic texts. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** This study bridges Van Leeuwen's legitimation strategies with Bourdieu's symbolic violence theory to analyse contemporary, high-profile Indonesian Islamic preaching, offering insights for advancing gender equality in Indonesian religious and educational contexts.

KEYWORDS: critical discourse analysis; legitimation strategies; religious discourse; religious studies; symbolic violence.

1. Introduction

According to Republic of Indonesia law number 59 of 2024, cultural and religious teachings are among factors influencing the nation's social norms and values. To satisfy the constitutional demand for national development, this law suggests a long-term national development plan/*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional* (RPJPN) and tackles a number of societal issues including a gender gap in several development sectors, which impede the nation's progress.

Two indicators of Indonesian gender disparity are evident in women's participation in the labour force and their representation in politics. Men were more likely than women to be employed, and women were significantly under-represented in legislative bodies (Statistics Indonesia/*Badan Pusat Statistik*, 2025). Women's involvement in the country's

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development is needed both for social justice and economic necessities. Eliminating poverty and fostering economic success can result from reducing the gender gap in economic opportunities (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990) as more women in leadership positions tend to create more compassionate and egalitarian societies (Cowper-Coles, 2021). Women policymakers generally prioritise social welfare, transparency, and peace, and they bring collaborative leadership approaches to politics (Cowper-Coles, 2021). Since they encourage a more responsive and transparent government, all members of society can benefit.

Indonesia's more than 300 distinct ethnic groups (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022) lead to diverse gender roles due to their long-standing history and tradition. Matrilineal ethnic groups like the Minangkabau pass family names, ancestry, and property inheritance through the female bloodlines, though men still have political authority (Atkinson & Errington, 1990). Patrilineal groups like the Batak restrict women from inheriting or participating in public decision-making, making them reliant on men for financial support (Atkinson & Errington, 1990). Egalitarian bilateral groups like the Javanese have women heavily involved in farming and business though historically excluded them from politics (Atkinson & Errington, 1990). These cultures illustrate the complex devolution of labour and authority, and how social norms can inhibit gender equality even in egalitarian society with collaborative economic roles. Their diversity clarifies that gender roles are not static, homogeneous concepts, but rather a social construct based on the interaction of power, history, and cultural norms. Consequently, they convincingly reject any particular interpretation of "Indonesian womanhood" and foreground the importance of including local context when analysing gender and power.

Priorly, the New Order dictatorship in Indonesia (1966-1998) prescribed an official gender ideology which Suryakusuma (2011) conceptualised as Ibuisme Negara or State Ibuism, a homogenous identity for Indonesian women centred on a gendered notion of *ibu* or mother. Within the discourse of Ibuism, women gain identity following principles of Panca Dharma Wanita (five duties of women) as faithful wife, educating mother, homemaker, additional breadwinner, and useful member of society (Huda, 2020; Suryakusuma, 1996). They were imposed under the disguising discourse of prioritising the state's stability, direction, and order (Suryakusuma, 2011). While institutionalising women's duties to serve their spouses, families, communities, and nation in altruistic manner, these ideals reflect merits of self-sacrifice and nurture, which emphasised responsibility over rights (Blackburn, 2004). State Ibuism led to the process of domestication, which included the political, ideological, and cultural spheres in addition to the economic (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1992). It facilitated the government in upholding social hierarchies that were crucial to its power and male domination (Rhoads, 2012; Suryakusuma, 2011). This ideal women concept persists after the regime fall, forcing women to contend with burdens of unpaid domestic labour and precarious employment in the contemporary economy. Ultimately, it affects the perception of excellent and ideal women in modern Indonesian society (Blackburn, 2004).

Though a semi-secular country, Indonesia has the largest Muslim population globally (Hackett et al., 2025) who rely heavily on Islamic preaching to shape their social norms. It includes the patriarchal ones (Nur & Riyadi, 2023), which are contested by the nation's moderate Islamic groups (Halim & Maulana, 2019), and continues to influence religious education. Indonesian female ulama's attempts to challenge patriarchal norms from within the Islamic framework by reinterpreting Quranic texts around justice and equality demonstrate that faith-based reasoning can drive gender justice, establishing a locally legitimate form of feminism that bridges Islamic scholarship with global equity movement (Zakka et al., 2025). However, Islamic jurisprudence and exegesis have consistently reflected a male-dominated academic legacy that upheld traditional gender norms (Barlas, 2002; Booth & Cooke, 2002). Women are often portrayed as lower in ability and position in religious discourse due to gender discrimination, particularly with regards to roles outside

the home. Religious discourse that upholds normative gender expectations reinforces these biases.

A myriad of prior research has examined Islamic religious discourse using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in sermons (Eldin, 2014; Kadhim, 2022) and corpus-assisted CDA in religious discourse in social media (Hamouda et al., 2023; Mansouri et al., 2017). They persuasively use rhetorical and framing strategies to create ideal religious conduct and collective religious identity, as well as summon moral and religious authority. Additionally, articles on Islamic websites employ positioning representation to depict unjust patriarchal dominance over women (Nur & Riyadi, 2023). These studies show how language is used to exercise religious power and authority while concealing power dynamics, fostering bias ideology and interpretation, and reflecting hegemonic control.

This study's purpose is to identify gender biases in Indonesia's preaching texts, which are believed to contradict the country's commitment to gender equality, made by a subgroup of Indonesian Muslim preachers with a large following on social media and YouTube. This study seeks to address the question: "In what ways do discursive legitimation strategies function as mechanisms of symbolic violence in shaping women's roles and duties?" It aims to advance knowledge of how regular religious preachings support maintenace or transformation of gender norms and provide insights that can guide more inclusive, egalitaerian religion and gender education. It also supports larger initiatives within Indonesian society to advance gender justice in religious and cultural context, in line with the country's national development plan (RPJPN) for gender equality.

2. Methods

2.1 Data corpus

Data is collected from a corpus of 45,125 words including legitimation annotation. It was transcribed by the Indonesian researcher from 450-minute of six Indonesian language Islamic preaching YouTube videos, featuring 4 male and 2 female preachers. Six sermons transcription are generated into six clusters (Table 1), and tags were manually created for the categories and subcategories in Van Leeuwen's (2007) legitimation framework (Table 2 and 3). The maxims set by Leech (1993) are abided by in the tagging and legitimation annotation processes done by the Indonesian researcher. The preachers' selected excerpts representing subcategories of legitimation included in this paper are translated from Indonesian language into English.

Table 1. Cluster names

Cluster	Name
1	m_message
2	m_quran
3	m_fitnah
4	m_home
5	f_salihah
6	f_god

Table 2. Categories of tag set

Legitimation Strategy	TAG Set
Authorization	ATZ
Moral Evaluation	MRL
Rationalization	RTZ
Mythopoesis	MYT

Table 3. Subcategories of tag set

Legitimation strategy	Categories	Subcategories	TAG Set
Authorization	Custom	Tradition	<custom tradition>
Authorization	Authority	Personal	<authority personal>
Authorization	Authority	Impersonal	<authority impersonal>
Authorization	Recommendation	Expert	<recommendation expert>
Authorization	Recommendation	Role model	<recommendation role model>
Moral evaluation	Evaluation	-	<evaluation>
Moral evaluation	Abstraction	-	<abstraction>
Moral evaluation	Analogies	-	<analogies>
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Goal-orientation	<instrumental goal>
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Mean-orientation	<instrumental mean>
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Effect-orientation	<instrumental effect>
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Definition	<theoretical definition>
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Explanation	<theoretical explanation>
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Prediction	<theoretical prediction>
Mythopoesis	Moral tale	-	<mythopoesis mtale>
Mythopoesis	Cautionary tale	-	<mythopoesis ctale>

The preaching videos were taken from different preaching YouTube channels, published between December 2023 and June 2025, and they were based on actual preaching recordings discussing women in Islam in front of mostly female audiences in offline Islamic gatherings. The corpus provides a timely and targeted collection of the country's actual religious preaching discourse for CDA analyses. When selecting the videos, relevant subjects of women's roles and duties, as well as the preachers' stardom are considered. These preachers are a subgroup of popular Indonesian Islamic preachers who gain their initial fame through TV appearances and maintain strong social media presence. At the point of data collection, their channels had 213.67 million views and 2.1 million subscribers on average. Each preacher has roughly 2M, 5.6M, 10M, 1M, 3M, as well as 280K followers on Instagram. Due to their national popularity and influence, their YouTube preaching videos make a good source for assessing the impact of gender bias in religious discourse.

2.2 Corpus analysis

The corpus was analysed using a computer application, AntConc. Selected passages were then arranged into tables according to the categories that corresponded with the discursive legitimation strategies by Van Leeuwen (2007). These legitimacy discourses indicating prejudiced opinion against women were investigated under CDA lens. Their results were then interpreted using the framework of symbolic violence, doxa, and habitus (Bourdieu, 1991). Representation of women and linguistic tools employed to normalise particular gender noms and hierarchies are then evaluated and concluded. Discourse analysis is enhanced with validity and reliability when grounded in shared socio-cultural frames and codes (Jaipal-Jamani, 2014). Because one of the researchers is a Muslim with Indonesian nationality fluent in the pertinent language, religious texts, and cultural contexts, their insider knowledge provides legitimate grounds for the study's interpretations.

2.3 Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

CDA treats discourse as a form of social practice, highlighting how linguistic choices or strategies both reflect and reproduce power relations, ideologies, and inequalities. CDA inspects how language reflects, upholds, and challenges social structure, ideology, and power dynamics (Fairclough, 1992; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). In religious contexts, language can reflect gender hierarchies under the guise of divine intent, thus religious preaching may present unjust perspectives, framings, or ideologies while imparting and teaching spiritual and moral values. Fairclough (1995) emphasizes the dialectical relationship between text, discursive practice, and social practice, offering a model for examining how language in religious preachings normalises biased gender views. Verbal excerpts in the corpus are evaluated to identify the goal, message, and implications of power underlying the use of legitimation strategies in sustaining particular ideologies and how they generate social meaning and practice.

2.4 Legitimation strategies

Religious discourse possesses a sense of mystery and sacred legitimacy, despite the fact that its interpretation has historically been limited to educated religious elites such as priests, intellectuals, and clergy. Van Leeuwen (2007) provides a paradigm to analyse legitimation used in religious preaching and clarify the interconnectedness of discourse analysis, legitimation, and power.

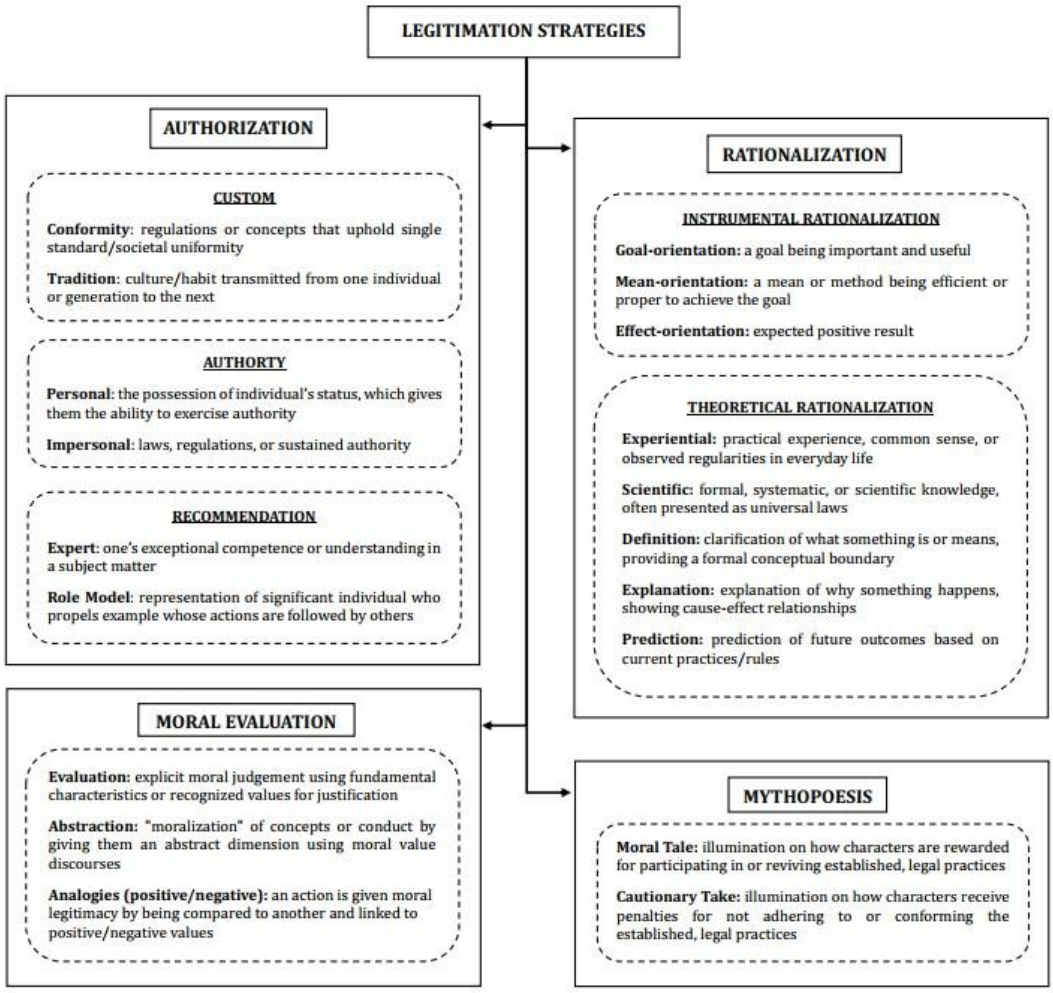


Fig. 1. Subcategories of legitimation strategies
(Van Leeuwen, 2007)

As presented in Figure 1, the four strategies in Van Leeuwen's (2007) discursive construction of legitimation are authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. First, authorization justifies the authority of customs, tradition, law, and those with institutional authority. It includes three categories: custom seeks legitimacy through tradition and conformity; authority seeks legitimacy through both personal and impersonal authority; and recommendation seeks legitimacy through authority from experts and role models. Second, moral evaluation makes use of belief and value systems to support legitimacy. Third, rationalization provides logical legitimacy to the goals and uses of structured social action as well as the knowledge that society has produced. Two types of rationalization are theoretical rationalization which arguing a justification on the way things are or some kind of truth, whereas instrumental rationalization supports action by pointing to its goals, means, and effects (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Mythopoesis uses stories that praise virtue such as in morale tale and punish immorality such as in cautionary tale to defend legitimacy (Van Leeuwen, 2007).

2.5 Symbolic violence

Bourdieu (1991) argued that modern social hierarchies, social justices, and the suffering they induce are established and maintained by symbolic dominance, rather than physical force. Outcomes of such dominance is referred as "symbolic violence", the capacity to create or alter an unquestioned reality that is regarded as normal in a particular sphere (Bourdieu, 1991).

Symbolic violence uses language as a tool to produce, maintain, and spread symbolic dominance (Bourdieu, 1991). It can seem normal that it is ignored, and its underlying arbitrariness is obscured when it is concentrated to the extent that it permeates the entire social landscape. Eventually, it becomes the ability to create social reality (Bourdieu, 1991). As a result, social categories and beliefs are created, replicated, and given legitimacy by symbolic power, including in religious spheres. When it is internalised by society and goes unrecognised, it preserves the symbolic system and amplifies oppression as the dominated group will not question the status quo, and the dominant group does not need to actively exert effort to secure their privilege (Bourdieu, 1991).

Symbolic violence spreads through doxa, fundamental views or dogmatised beliefs that require no explicit justification (Bourdieu, 1991). Because doxa is a symbolic form of authority, those who are subject to it must not question its legitimacy or the legitimacy of those who administer it. Once internalised, doxa will develop into habitus,

"systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structure" (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53).

Habitus is embodied unconscious dispositions or tendencies that people develop as a result of their social, cultural, and economic capital (Bietti, 2023), thus it directs perception and behaviours without conscious thought. Whereas symbolic violence and doxa represent the structure of dominance, habitus explains how these structures are embodied as persistent dispositions.

Religious discourse and symbolic violence are closely connected, because justification using religion is frequently employed to legitimise the preservation or reproduction of power dynamics and social inequalities without those affected even realising it. Bourdieu's contributions to the study of gender relations and religion can be helpful in explaining the reasons people tolerate a religious system that seems to disfavour them

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Quantitative results

Legitimation strategies were employed 651 times throughout all clusters. Authorization (371) has the highest occurrences of legitimation strategies, followed by moral evaluation (162), rationalization (90), and mythopoesis (28). Details regarding the frequency of legitimation strategy subcategories are presented in Table 4. Impersonal authorization becomes the highest occurred subcategories of all legitimation strategies due to the preachers' tendency to reiterate the significance of their reasoning by repeating the verse, its translation, and elaboration. The least and common legitimation used are visualised in Figure 2.

Table 4. Frequencies of legitimation strategy subcategories

Legitimation strategy	Categories	Subcategories	Frequency
Authorization	Custom	Tradition	3
Authorization	Authority	Personal	38
Authorization	Authority	Impersonal	183
Authorization	Recommendation	Expert	60
Authorization	Recommendation	Role model	87
Moral evaluation	Evaluation	-	8
Moral evaluation	Abstraction	-	140
Moral evaluation	Analogies	-	14
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Goal-orientation	12
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Mean-orientation	11
Rationalization	Instrumental rationalization	Effect-orientation	20
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Definition	29
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Explanation	10
Rationalization	Theoretical rationalization	Prediction	8
Mythopoesis	Moral tale	-	20
Mythopoesis	Cautionary tale	-	8

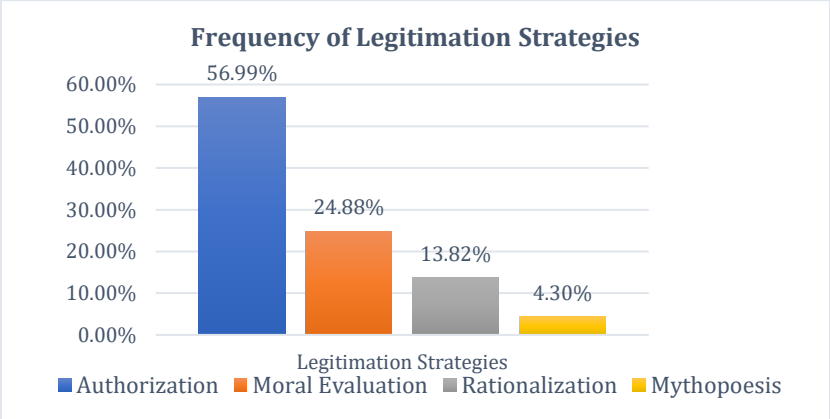


Fig. 2. Frequencies of authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis

3.1.2 Qualitative results

3.1.2.1 Analysis of discursive legitimation strategies

Discursive legitimation strategies are employed in CDA to reveal the underlying argument that supports the portrayal of particular behaviour, laws, or ideologies as

important, necessary, and inevitable. Without them, authority and control are at risk of being seen as arbitrary or repressive.

Results as presented in Figure 3, 4, 5, and 6, reveals how legitimation strategies are used in the corpus to impose unequal gender norms, order, and power dynamics. Authorization presents prescriptive gender norms regarding women's submission to endurance, patience, and piety within family and marital context, as divinely approved and unquestionable. Moral evaluation positioned women's role and duties as the moral locus of the family and society, abstracting their worth into ideals of obedience and sacrifice, and making them disproportionately responsible for social stability and collective morality. Rationalization reinterprets achievement and responsibilities in ways that marginalise women and position their domesticity as natural, reasonable, and necessary for the survival of the nation. Mythopoesis legitimises enduring inequality by reinforcing doctrines of patience, selflessness, and subordination.

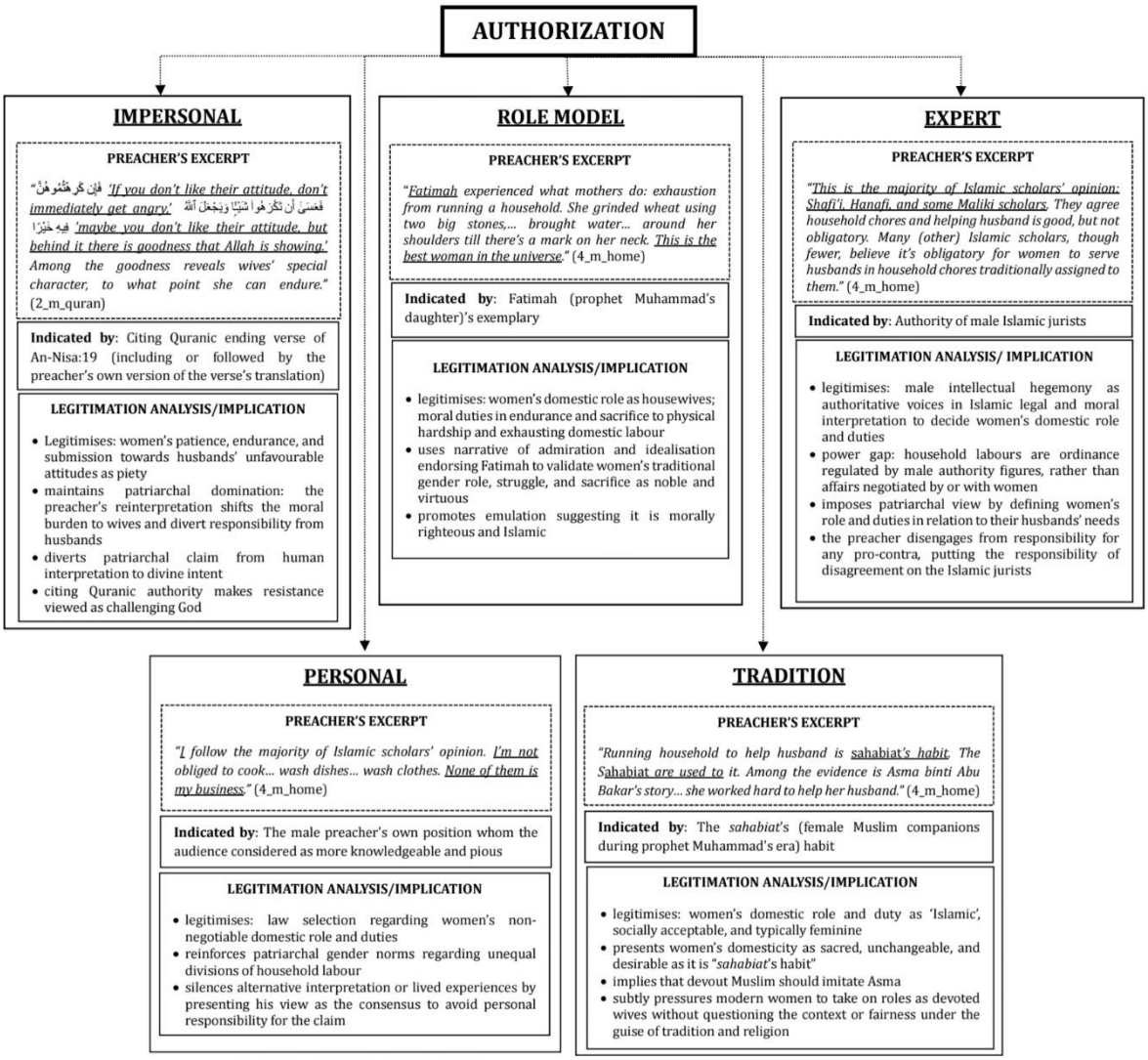


Fig. 3. Authorization findings

Impersonal authorization (see Figure 3) is an example of the misuse of Quranic verse An-Nisa:19 to legitimise unjust moral duties of patience and acceptance for wives. An-Nisa:19 was revealed during pre-Islamic Arabia as critique to tribal customs which treated women like property that, when a man died, his male relatives could inherit her widow, and these women were treated horribly following that (Shihab, 2016). This commonly happens

in societies with tribal systems, motivated by the desire to keep the deceased husband's dowry or fortune within his family, and ultimately makes women's life miserable (Nasr et al., 2015). An-Nisa:19 was disclosed to end these abuses and defend women's rights. It prohibits men from forcing women into marriage, controlling their persons, manipulating their finances, and advises men to be kind and patient and desist from acting maliciously or causing women problems (Shihab, 2016). The ending of the verse, يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ("...in which God has placed in them <the women> much good,") reveals God's declaration that there is a lot of good things in women.

Contrary to the verse's actual message, the preacher twists and manipulates An-Nisa:19's translation, changing its intention and meaning from men's obligations to treat women and wives fairly, to wives' eminence for patience and endurance. Besides directing the message only to his female audience, he added, "Among the goodness reveals the special character of a wife, to what point she can endure" (2_m_quran). This shows the preacher misinterprets Quran by putting it out of context and cherry-picking in his explanation, thus leading to false understanding. Nevertheless, challenging the preacher is difficult as he avoids criticism by citing the Quran authority, and his cleric status makes people believe he is more pious and knowledgeable in Islamic teachings. In addition to the fact that Quran requires interpretative readings and there are so many books about Quran's interpretation (tafsir), it is often found that Muslims do not fully comprehend every verse in the Quran; thus, they may not be able to identify any instances of misuse.

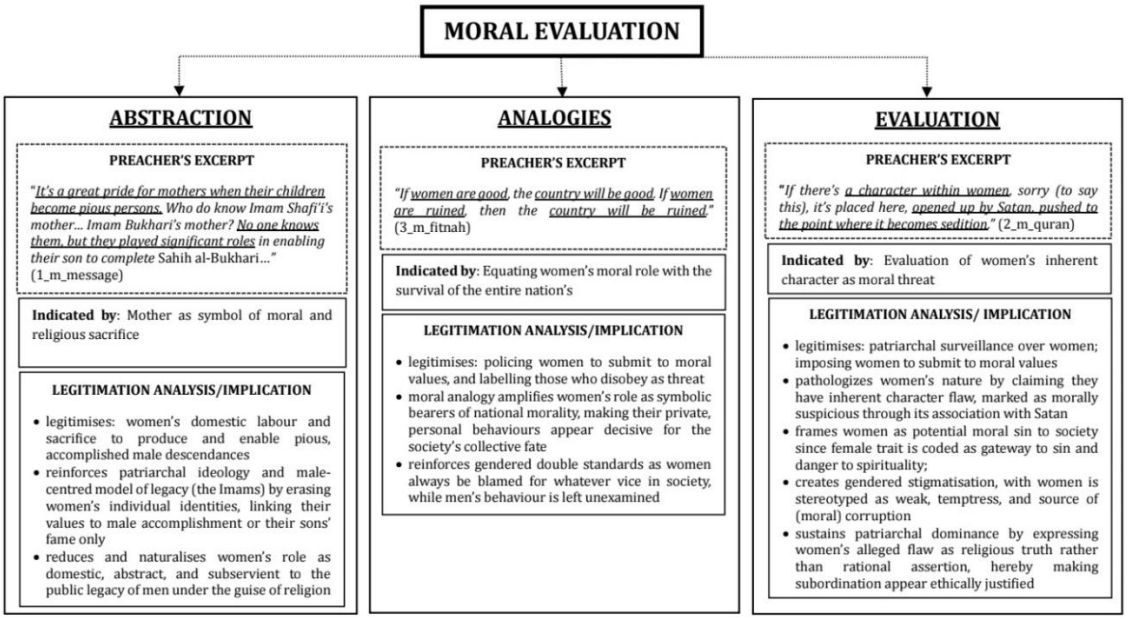


Fig. 4. Moral evaluation findings

Additionally, themes regarding women's confinement to roles and duties in household labour appears numerous times, but the absence of citations from Quran or hadith (prophet Muhammad's sayings and doings) in support of this position is revealing. Quran as the supreme source of Islamic teaching emphasises the importance of fairness and respect in a husband-wife relationship numerous times (e.g. in Al-Baqarah:187, Ar-Rum:21, An-Nisa:1, An-Nisa:19, etc.), yet none of them specifically state or assign domestic responsibilities strictly to women. It is also impossible for the preachers to claim that the prophet said or exemplified imposing domesticity on women as he himself displayed egalitarian traits; he never confined his wives at home, and he even took care of household chores including cooking (Barlas, 2002). Therefore, the rules confining women to unjust domesticity may only be founded on the accounts of early female Muslims' stories, the classic Islamic jurists

or the clerics' personal opinion (see Figure 3 legitimation of authorization, Figure 4 moral evaluation, and Figure 5 rationalization). This implies that domesticity is not a clear direct scriptural injunction, but rather the result of human interpretation in Islamic jurisprudence, where the jurists' rulings and decisions are influenced by their particular social presumption (Ali, 2004) or the culture where they lived.



Fig. 5. Rationalization findings

Affirming duties of obedience and endurance of inequality from submissive wives without first asking men to protect and provide for their wives' physical and emotional needs (see legitimation of impersonal on Figure 3, effect-orientation and goal-orientation

on Figure 5, and moral tale on Figure 6) is established as a non-negotiable rule, even part of divine command and mission, encouraging an unjust marital relationship. Obedience can be oppressive when it lacks mutual vision and respect while submission represses women's opinions, intelligence, or personalities, leading them to become mute shells. If husbands are above correction, they are inclined to make negligent decisions and abuse their wives. Imposing blind obedience and submission is never part of true Islamic teaching. Quran never designates the prophet or men as husbands to rule over wives, nor does it mandate women to submit to their husbands (Barlas, 2002). The prophet's wives themselves occasionally argued with him despite his position as God's messenger, but he is known to never verbally or physically abuse them (Barlas, 2002), and he voluntarily divorced those who are unwilling to remain married to him (Ali, 2004).

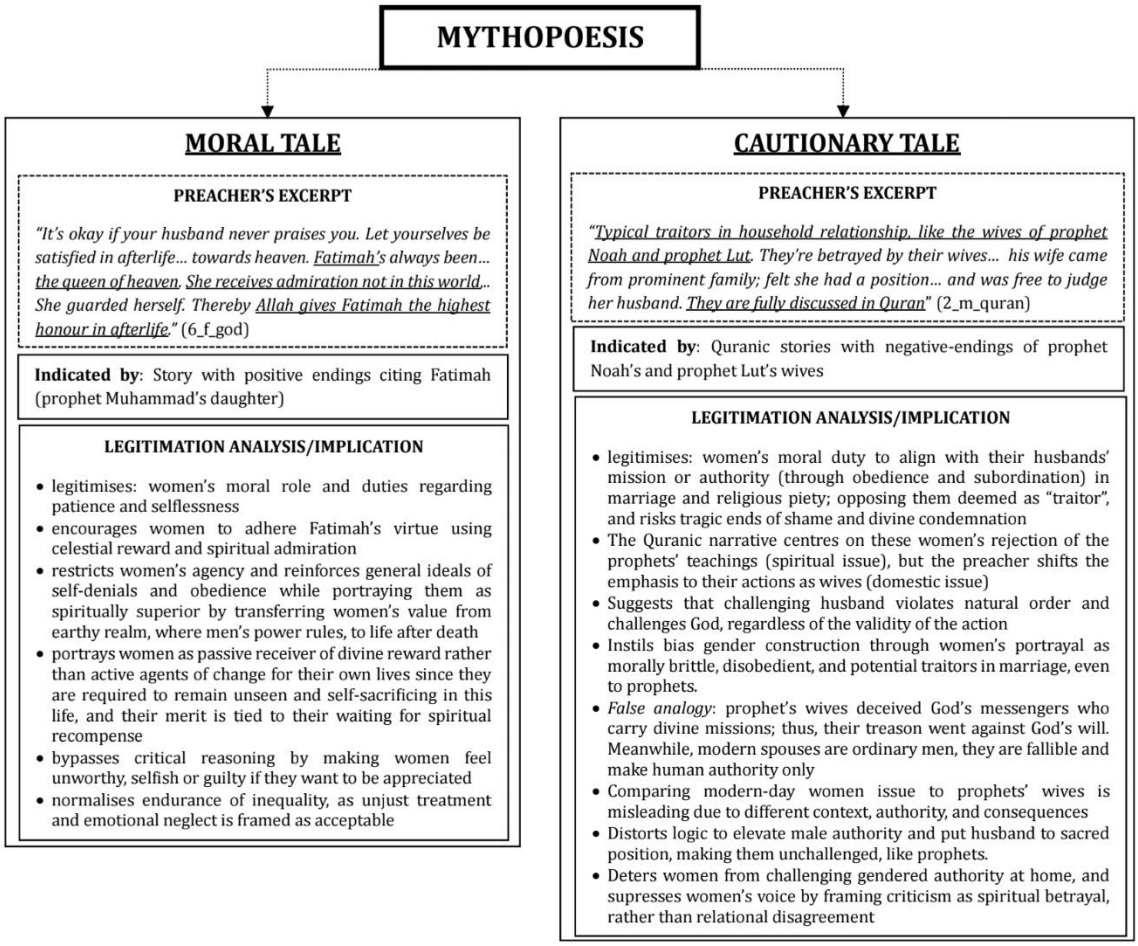


Fig. 6. Moral evaluation findings

Legitimation strategies across the corpus creates a discursive mechanism that normalises gendered subordination while hiding it beneath the façade of sacred authority, moral virtue, rational and national necessity, and narrative tradition. They consistently promote women to take all the burden of physical and emotional labour within marriage, family, and society context while leaving men from shared responsibilities and accountabilities. Such readings justify unequal gender relations that depicting these as fixed and divinely commanded, instead of providing discursive space for alternate or egalitarian interpretations.

3.1.2.2 Analysis of symbolic violence, doxa, and habitus

3.1.2.2.1 Symbolic violence

Symbolic violence is manifested in authorization through Quranic verses, scholars, role models, and tradition as it leverages spiritual authority to portray patriarchal gender roles and duties as divine truth. Citing An-Nisa:19 silences criticism by endowing God with legitimacy and making inequality appear unassailable. Similarly, calling Fatimah "The best woman in the universe" (4_m_home) affirms her silent endurance of hardship as the epitome of perfect femininity. Second, moral evaluation employs symbolic violence by moralising gender inequality. When claims like "If women are good, the country will be good" (3_m_fitnah) are made, women face the burden of national morality. Therefore, their behaviour is not only governed by religion, but also connected to society's overall fate, making deviation seem detrimental and deplorable. Third, gender bias ideology uses rationalization to pass for logic. Redefining success solely in domestic terms and attributing corruption and leadership crises to women's failure as family carer ("Who's to blame… it's women's job to prepare future generation" (1_m_message)) imposes patriarchal standards as rational explanations. Men's accountability disappears while women are symbolically forced to take responsibility of systemic problems. Fourth, mythopoesis uses poignant narratives to convey symbolic violence. Stories of Fatimah's everlasting reward motivate women to endure with negligence by promising them heavenly recompense, yet cautioning stories about the wives of prophet Noah and prophet Lut serve as warning, depicting women's disobedience as disastrous betrayal. These narratives tie women into accepting subordination through emotion and faith.

In all case, symbolic violence is made effective because it is misrecognised: domination as religious obligation, virtue, or spiritual destiny, not as oppression. Religious legitimacy, moral superiority, national survival, and heavenly rewards become the fuel to motivate women to internalise domination and view it as a natural, moral, and divinely mandated behaviour.

3.1.2.2.2 Doxa

Table 5 shows four doxic beliefs reproduced in the preaching corpus. They include those pertaining to domesticity, obedience, the moral burden and accountability of society, and endurance.

Table 5. *Doxa* Findings

No.	Doxa
1.	Domesticity as women's natural realm
2.	Obedience as the essence of piety
3.	Society's moral being women's responsibilities
4.	Connecting women's endurance with spiritual destiny

First, domesticity is framed as women's natural realm. Women's domestic function is seen as common sense as in, "A career women… succeeds in setting up her household the best way," (4_m_home) which leaves little room for alternative roles in discourse. Second, obedience is made the essence of piety. Excerpts such as, "Before God what matters is piety… how obedient you are to your spouse" (5_f_salihah), accept compliance as the central tenet of women's religion, construing resistance as sacrilege. Third, placing women under the moral burden of society. Women are positioned as the axis of national morality in, "If women are good, the country will be good. If the women are ruined, then the country will be ruined," (3_m_fitnah). This validates holding women collectively responsible for the well-being of society while ignoring the structural causes of politics, institutions, society, and

men's behaviour. Fourth, equating spiritual destiny with endurance. By rendering emotional neglect as expected, sacrosanct, and inviolable, narratives such as "if you find flaw in your husband… be happy… because Allah pointed... (you) to demonstrate your strength" (2_m_quran) encourages women to see inequality as a part of divine order rather than a societal construct.

These doxic beliefs are seen as evident truths, which makes them powerful and long-lasting. They also maintain doxic order that excludes alternative or egalitarian readings and accepts women's role as obedient wives, selfless mothers, and moral guardians of the nation as inherent realities. Subsequently, through symbolic violence and doxa, the preaching discourse perpetuates social order where gender inequality is rendered invisible and unquestionable, patriarchy is sanctified, and women's subordination is misinterpreted as piety.

3.1.2.2.3 Habitus

Besides influencing interpretation, symbolic violence gradually becomes sedimented into habitus. Repeated advice like "Be patient if your husband… being a test in life," (6_f_god) or "It's okay if your husband never praises you…," (6_f_god), "Don't dig into his shortcomings," (2_m_quran) inculcate dispositions of endurance, humility, and deferral of recognition. What starts out as a preached instruction is progressively embodied as a habitual way of relating to the world. Accepting notions such as, "a career woman… successfully builds the best possible household, raises her children with the best education, and obeys and fears Allah…" (4_m_home), may lead women to orient their aspiration and dignity towards domestic achievements, even with the absence of outside pressure. They mistake domination as legitimate, normal, or even beneficial. Thereby, symbolic violence is not only misrecognised, but also integrated, resulting in dispositions that support patriarchal structures.

Repetition and reinforcement of misrecognition are what moves discourse into the domain of doxa, the uncontested, self-evident truth. These doxa evolve into habitus (internalised dispositions that direct perception, cognition, and behaviour) through exposure and iteration. In this study, gender bias is not limited to the text, but also manifests in embodied practises. Female audiences internalise the gender roles that guide their opinion and attitude without conscious effort since it is deem natural and right. Thus, they embody dispositions of obedience, patience, and self-sacrifice as natural aspects of their identity. This demonstrates how preaching discourses sustain gendered hierarchies practically and bodily.

3.2 Discussion

At the micro level, results from legitimation strategies (Van Leeuwen, 2007) analysis reverberated these biases as they encourage power imbalance and gender inequality. Authorization uses divine authority to make gendered expectations impervious to criticism. Moral evaluation elevates women's compliance into a moral obligation, deprives women from real agency and burdens them with disproportionate responsibility for the familial and societal ethical condition. It turns public or policy failure into women's failure in "piety" and "domesticity". Rationalization shifts religious mandate into utilitarian reasoning by asserting domesticity and unequal roles as logical and necessary for national survival while disguising power disparities under the pretence of social utility and natural order. Finally, mythopoesis turns the absence of rights into an honour; it produces narratives valorising submission and suffering, portraying selflessness and enduring inequality as means to achieve societal and spiritual triumph, making inequality appear both acceptable and virtuous. These strategies reveal deeper power dynamics in religious discourse as they are

not neutrally used; they serve as means to elevate specific interpretations of scripture and tradition to the realm of uncontested truth.

At the macro level, these discursive patterns are interpreted through Bourdieu's (1991) theory. Recurring legitimation strategies manifests into symbolic violence as they become mechanism through which unjust gender ideology is reproduced and normalised. They create doxa or implicit beliefs that women's roles and duties are inherently being obedient wives, selfless mothers, and moral guardian of the society. When these are believed and internalised, they become habitus that instil these standards in women's embodied dispositions, daily routines, and even aspirations, making them very potent.

Symbolic violence, doxa, and habitus in this study serve as mutually reinforcing mechanisms of gender dominance. Symbolic violence disguises subordination as divine truth. Doxa naturalises women's moral and domestic roles and duties as "what goes without saying" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.167). Habitus ensures that these logics are internalised and perpetuated as enduring dispositions, with women internalising submission as virtue.

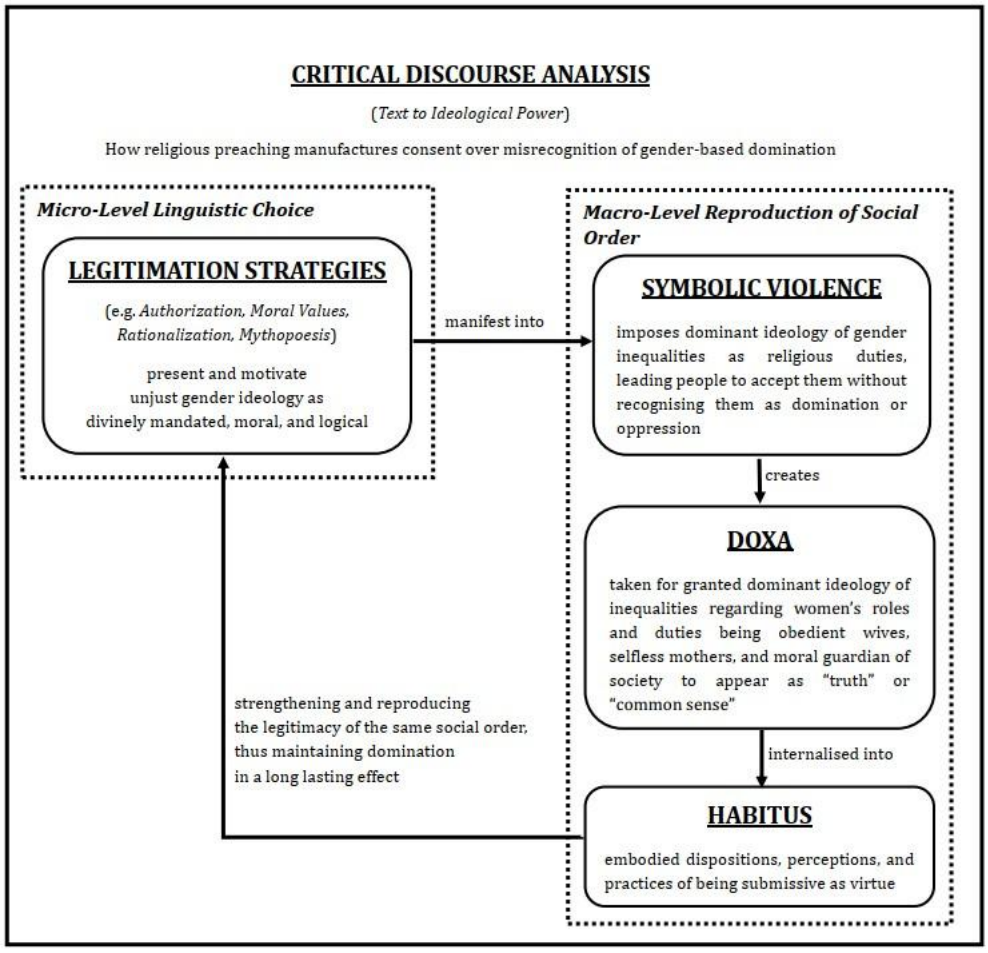


Fig. 7. CDA findings on relation between micro-level legitimation strategies and macro-level symbolic violence

From a CDA perspective (Fairclough, 1995), how ideology function to manufacture consent as opposed to compulsion are resulted from the micro-level linguistic choices of legitimation strategies that contribute to the macro-level reproduction of symbolic violence of gendered power relations. As illustrated (Figure 1), legitimation strategies in the preaching discourse form a discursive mechanism that naturalises unequal gender norms surrounding women's role being restricted to moral and domesticity while their duties strongly revolve around subordination, obedience, sacrifice, piety, and domestic

responsibilities, which spread despite scriptural justification. The preachers hide their ideological basis by cherry-picking or manipulating their explanation, or portraying inequality as divinely approved, morally upright, logically justifiable, and narratively significant. In this way, symbolic violence of domination and oppression are misrecognised as religious obligation, virtue, or spiritual destiny. When these are justified and taken as truth, religious preaching becomes more than a reflection of social norms or a medium for religious teaching. It turns into an active site of symbolic violence where women are driven to embody dispositions of obedience, patience, and self-sacrifice as inherent parts of their identities, and where unjust gender ideology is constructed, naturalised, and sustained.

In the context of this study, Bourdieu's (1982) argument emphasizes that religious leaders' words in sermons do not necessarily have intrinsic power. Rather, it stems from their social position or status, and the institutional power that the community delegated them. Therefore, words function as a type of doxa, or evidence of that delegated power, giving the message legitimacy or validity. To put it in a different way, the audience is the discourse's source of authority. Only when the audience believes in what is said or inquired, then the discourse gain authority. This interplay makes patriarchal relations legitimate, inevitable, and long-lasting; no overt coercion is needed for them to endure throughout generations.

4. Conclusions

This study clarifies how Indonesian Islamic preaching on YouTube functions as both a platform for spiritual guidance and discursive tool that normalises patriarchal control. It also emphasises its opposition to the Indonesian government's goal to advance gender equality, since women's involvement in the country's development is essential for both social justice and economic prosperity. Through the reciprocation of symbolic violence, doxa, and habitus, these narratives are embodied, internalised, and reproduced as enduring dispositions, which make subordination appear normal and unquestionable. By exposing how preachings combine theology, ideology, and power, these results highlight the way religious preaching can serve as social control mechanism that limits women's agency and maintain unequal gender orders. It emphasises the significance of rethinking Indonesian Muslim preachers' discourse in ways that support gender justice and the nation's goal for gender equality, as well as encourage more egalitarian readings of Islamic values.

Gender justice activists or religious educators may use this study findings to develop educational resources that dispel prejudices and offer more egalitarian interpretations of Islamic texts. Findings can also inform indonesian educational curricula and policymakers by encouraging more gender-sensitive and nuaced religious education that trancends traditional, patriarchal paradigms. Although selected six preaching videos allow a thorough examination, its narrow representatives naturally limit the conclusions' external validity. Since these preachers have a huge number of followers online, their sermons are likely influenced by their public personas, commercial interests, and dynamics of social media platforms. Thereby, findings may not be applicable to the broader spectrum of Islamic preaching in Indonesia, which encompasses a range of contexts and styles such as those found in traditional *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) or local mosques.

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Author Contribution

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