

Women's Political Leadership in Islam: A Comparative Analysis of Al-Maududi's and Al-Qaradawi's Views on Women as Regional Heads in Indonesia

(Kepemimpinan Politik Perempuan dalam Islam: Analisis Komparatif Pemikiran Al-Maududi dan Al-Qaradawi tentang Perempuan sebagai Kepala Daerah di Indonesia)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role and political participation of women in the 2024 Regional Elections and to examine the relevance of the views of two prominent Muslim scholars, Sayyid Abul A'la al-Maududi and Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, to the context of women's leadership as regional heads in Indonesia, a democratic country with a Muslim-majority population. This research employs a qualitative method using a descriptive-analytical and comparative library research approach. Data were collected through an examination of various sources, including Islamic jurisprudential literature, academic journals, official documents, and other relevant references. The findings reveal a significant increase in women's political participation in the 2024 Regional Elections, with 309 female candidates (19.92%), representing an increase of approximately 90% compared to the 2020 Regional Elections. Factors contributing to the electoral success of female candidates generally include higher educational attainment, political experience, and support from political dynasties. Nevertheless, women continue to face challenges such as quota-related regulatory constraints, money politics, and persistent negative stereotypes. A comparative analysis of the views of al-Maududi and al-Qaradawi demonstrates that al-Qaradawi's contextual approach is more compatible with the Indonesian socio-political context than al-Maududi's textualist interpretation. Al-Qaradawi's perspective provides greater legitimacy for women's leadership at the regional level, aligns with the values of Pancasila, and supports

affirmative action policies aimed at achieving 30% female political representation. Moreover, it has the potential to contribute positively to gender equality policies and inclusive regional development.

Keywords: Al-Maududi; Al-Qaradawi; Indonesia; Regional Heads; 2024 Regional Elections; Women's Leadership.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran dan partisipasi politik perempuan dalam Pilkada 2024 serta mengkaji relevansi pemikiran dua tokoh, Sayyid Abul A'la al-Maududi dan Syekh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, terhadap konteks kepemimpinan perempuan sebagai kepala daerah di Indonesia yang menganut sistem demokrasi dan berpenduduk mayoritas Muslim. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*) yang bersifat deskriptif-analitis dan komparatif. Data diperoleh melalui penelaahan berbagai sumber, termasuk literatur fikih Islam, jurnal ilmiah, dokumen resmi, dan referensi relevan lainnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa partisipasi politik perempuan dalam Pilkada 2024 mengalami peningkatan yang signifikan, dengan jumlah calon perempuan mencapai 309 orang (19,92%), meningkat sekitar 90% dibandingkan Pilkada 2020. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi keberhasilan calon perempuan antara lain tingkat pendidikan yang tinggi, pengalaman politik, dan dukungan dinasti politik. Namun demikian, perempuan masih menghadapi berbagai tantangan, seperti kendala regulasi kuota, praktik politik uang, dan stigma negatif di masyarakat. Analisis komparatif terhadap pemikiran al-Maududi dan al-Qaradawi menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan kontekstual al-Qaradawi lebih relevan dengan konteks Indonesia dibandingkan penafsiran tekstual al-Maududi. Pendekatan tersebut memberikan ruang yang lebih luas bagi kepemimpinan perempuan di tingkat daerah, sejalan dengan nilai-nilai Pancasila, serta berpotensi mendukung kebijakan *affirmative action* untuk mencapai 30% keterwakilan perempuan dalam politik. Selain itu, pendekatan tersebut juga berkontribusi positif terhadap penguatan kebijakan kesetaraan gender dan pembangunan daerah yang inklusif.

Kata Kunci: Al-Maududi; Al-Qaradawi; Indonesia; Kepala Daerah; Pilkada 2024; Kepemimpinan Perempuan.

Introduction

An old statement that has had a significant impact on limiting women's space is "politics is not for women," which has ultimately marginalized women in the political sphere, even on a small scale.¹ This is not in line with the classical definition of politics, which is to achieve the common good. In Indonesia, there is an imbalance between the roles of men and women, which is greatly influenced by the heterogeneous culture of Indonesian society. Gender imbalance is evident in all aspects, one of which is the government. Politics in Indonesia is still very much dominated by men, with men quantitatively outnumbering women.² Data shows that the number of female members has increased from 121 to 127 since the 2019 elections, a historic achievement for Indonesia, as it is a record high. Despite this increase, it has not reached the 30% threshold outlined in the 1995 UN report, which concluded that "while the number of women in political institutions does not directly guarantee women's advancement, the presence of at least 30% women in such institutions is crucial. This figure is considered the minimum threshold to ensure that women's voices are heard and considered in political decision-making."³

Direct regional elections were first held in 2005, giving women the opportunity to run for public office at the national, provincial, and district/city levels.⁴ According to the Central Statistics Agency, of the 34 provinces in Indonesia, only one female governor, Khofifah Indar Prawansa, serves as governor of East Java province. In the leadership landscape of the new autonomous regions in Papua, women are pretty rare. Only Ribka Haluk has successfully secured a strategic position as Acting Governor of Central Papua. At the national level, the position of female vice governor has also changed. Chusnunia Chalim, who was previously the only female vice governor, has resigned, leaving no female vice governors in Indonesia at present.⁵

¹ Tegar Putra Munggaran, "Peran Dan Pengaruh Perempuan Dalam Dinamika Politik Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Indonesia Sosial Teknologi* 4, no. 7 (14 Juli 2023): 804–17.

² Wery Gusmansyah, "Dinamika Kesenjangan Gender dalam Kehidupan Politik di Indonesia," *HAWA* 1, no. 1 (1 Juni 2019).

³ Direktorat Statistik Ketahanan Sosial, *Statistik Politik 2023, Vol. 13, 2023* (Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023), 47.

⁴ Mia Novitasari, Roni, dan Dirga Ardiansa, *Kepemimpinan Politik Delapan Kepala Daerah Perempuan: Tarik Ular Relasi dan Identitas* (Jakarta: Cakra Wikara Indonesia, 2021), 1.

⁵ Direktorat Statistik Ketahanan Sosial, *Statistik Politik 2023*, 50.

Throughout Indonesia's democratic journey, several female regional leaders have emerged, exerting a significant influence on the development of their respective regions. Their leadership success has yielded notable achievements, serving as clear evidence of women's capabilities in public leadership. Among them is Ratna Machmud, regent of Musi Rawas, South Sumatra, who is determined to have 10 memorizers of the Quran in every village. According to her, there is now a group of young people studying religion in every town.⁶ Not only that, there is also Umi Azizah, the regent of Tegal, who successfully reduced the poverty rate to 7.3% in 2023 from 7.9% in 2022.⁷ Meanwhile, in Mojokerto, there is Ika Puspitasari, the first female mayor of Mojokerto,⁸ who has proven her capabilities with an economic growth rate of 5.5% in 2022, up from 3.5% previously.⁹

Both classical and modern scholars have debated the issue of female leadership, and the diversity of opinions among scholars is due to differences in understanding the Quran and Hadith. Some scholars, such as Al-Maududi and Muhammad Abduh,¹⁰ interpret this verse in a general context and in light of the Hadith narrated by Abu Bakrah:

When news reached the Prophet, peace be upon him, that the Persians had appointed the daughter of Kisra (the title of the former king of Persia) as their ruler, he, peace be upon him, said, "A people will not prosper if they entrust their leadership to a woman." (HR. Bukhari no. 4425)

Historians of Islamic political thought note that the political use of this hadith as a categorical bar on female rule is itself contested; a historical survey of women who governed Muslim states across fifteen centuries shows that the

⁶ "10 Kepala Daerah Perempuan Yang Menginspirasi, Dari Indah Putri Indriani Hingga Khofifah Indar Parawansa," Cantikadotcom, 24 Juni 2024, <https://www.cantika.com/read/1883500/10-kepala-daerah-perempuan-yang-menginspirasi-dari-indah-putri-indriani-hingga-khofifah-indar-parawansa>.

⁷ diswayjateng.id, "Pesan Bupati Tegal Umi Azizah di Detik-detik Akhir Jabatannya," diakses 13 Januari 2025, <https://jateng.disway.id/read/669122/pesan-bupati-tegal-umi-azizah-di-detik-detik-akhir-jabatannya>.

⁸ Dwi Erianto, "Wali Kota Mojokerto Ika Puspitasari," *kompas.id*, 25 April 2022, <https://www.kompas.id/baca/tokoh/2022/04/26/wali-kota-mojokerto-ika-puspitasari>.

⁹ "Pengalaman Seru Ika Puspitasari Menjabat Sebagai Wali Kota Mojokerto Perempuan Pertama," Cantikadotcom, 4 September 2023, <https://www.cantika.com/read/1767668/pengalaman-seru-ika-puspitasari-menjabat-sebagai-wali-kota-mojokerto-perempuan-pertama>.

¹⁰ Kasjim Salenda, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Perspektif Islam," *Al-Risalah* 12 (Makassar: UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2012), 371.

hadith's invocation in later polemics says as much about political contestation as it does about revealed prohibition.¹¹

Meanwhile, scholars who support female leadership, such as Abu Hanifah and the Ahmadiyya community,¹² support it as long as the candidate meets the qualifications required of a leader. They have their arguments to support their views, and Yusuf al-Qaradhawi holds a view that aligns with the demands of the times without neglecting the aspects of Islam.¹³

As times have changed, the legitimacy of Islam regarding female leadership has undergone dynamic developments. Modern Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia now accept female leadership. Times have changed. Women now have the same rights to lead and contribute to national development. Outdated views that limit women's roles must be abandoned. Religious scholars play a crucial role in supporting this by offering more inclusive interpretations of spiritual teachings.¹⁴ This shift aligns with Azyumardi Azra's view that modern Muslim societies must reinterpret Islamic texts to support democratic values, including gender equality in leadership.¹⁵ On the other hand, some contemporary scholars, such as Abu A'la Al-Maududi, still adhere to classical interpretations that limit women's leadership roles. In his work "Al-Hijab,"¹⁶ Al-Maududi asserts that public leadership entrusted to women contradicts the natural order and essence established by Allah.

Sayyid Abu A'la Al-Maududi (1903–1979) was one of the prominent contemporary Islamic thinkers born in Aurangabad, India, and is recognized as a leading figure in the Islamic reform movement of the 20th century.¹⁷ As a scholar who lived during the political upheaval in India and Pakistan, Al-Maududi's ideas were greatly influenced by the social and political context of

¹¹ Fatima Mernissi, *The Forgotten Queens of Islam*, trans. Mary Jo Lakeland (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

¹² Shafira, Maryam, dan Kurniati, "Tantangan dan Peluang Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Masyarakat Perspektif Hukum Islam," *Posita: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 2, no. 2 (27 Desember 2024): 85–94.

¹³ Sejahtera Muhammad, "Hukum Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Perspektif Siyasa Syar'iyah (Studi atas Metode Istinbath al-Ahkam Yusuf al-Qaradhawi)" (Banda Aceh: UIN Ar-Raniry Darussalam, 2020), 7–8.

¹⁴ Mufarikhin dan Siti Malaiha Dewi, "Analisis Kepemimpinan Perempuan Muslim dalam Konteks Kontemporer," *Politea* 4, no. 1 (26 Juni 2021): 55.

¹⁵ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Substantif: Agar Umat Tidak Jadi Buih* (Jakarta: Mizan, 2000), 152.

¹⁶ Sayyid Abu Aala Mawdudi, *Purdah: The Status of Women in Islam*.

¹⁷ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

his time, particularly in addressing issues of modernity and Islamic governance systems. Raised in a devoutly religious family, Al-Maududi began his career as a journalist and later founded the Jamaat Islami movement in 1941. Through his works such as *Al-Hijab* and *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, Al-Maududi proposed a comprehensive concept of Islamic governance based on strict principles of Sharia law.¹⁸

Al-Maududi's thoughts on women entering politics as governors, mayors, and presidents are based on Qs. al-Ahzab: 33, which reads:

"Stay in your homes and do not adorn yourselves (and behave) like the ignorant people of old. Establish prayer, pay zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Verily, Allah only wishes to remove sin from you, O people of the household, and purify you with a thorough purification" (Qs. al-Ahzab: 33)

Al-Maududi interprets this verse as clearly stating that the Qur'an does not permit women to engage in social activities outside the home, work in offices alongside men, receive education alongside male students at universities, work as nurses caring for men in hospital wards, work as flight attendants, or be sent abroad for educational or training purposes.¹⁹

Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi is a contemporary scholar who is active in the Muslim Brotherhood.²⁰ In several of his books, he reveals that Hasan al-Banna had a profound influence on his thinking. His involvement as a Muslim Brotherhood activist led him to organize and lead demonstrations against Western imperialism and Israel actively.²¹ Yusuf al-Qardhawi's views on the role of women in Islamic politics differ from those of earlier scholars. Earlier scholars generally believed that only men could be leaders. However, al-Qardhawi thinks that women can become judges under certain conditions. He believes that women's involvement in social life is significant. Therefore, al-Qardhawi's views are considered more moderate. Al-Qardhawi also distinguishes between modern political leaders (such as presidents or members of parliament) and religious leaders (such as caliphs).²²

¹⁸ Tri Masulah, "Aktivitas Kaum Perempuan dalam Bidang Politik (Kajian Pemikiran Abu Al-A'la Al-Maudûdî)," *Muwazah* 1, no. 2 (Juli–Desember 2009): 110–112.

¹⁹ Putri Adelia, "Hak dan Aktivitas Politik Perempuan Perspektif Abul A'la Al-Maududi," *Ushuluna: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin* 5, no. 2 (5 Mei 2020): 206.

²⁰ Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, eds., *Global Mufti: The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi* (London: Hurst & Co., 2009).

²¹ "Biografi Yusuf al-Qaradhawi" (Riau: UIN Suska Riau), diakses 15 Januari 2025, <https://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/2497/3/BAB%20II.pdf>.

²² Asif Trisnani, Wenning Windiarti, dan Hidayatus Sa'adah, "Peran Perempuan dalam Politik Menurut Yusuf Al-Qardhawi," *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama dan Pemikiran Islam* 19, no. 2 (September 2021): 210.

Al-Maududi and Al-Qardhawi, two prominent figures in contemporary Islam, present differing perspectives on female leadership. Both use various methods and approaches in interpreting religious texts to support their arguments — a hermeneutical divergence that mirrors a broader debate among Muslim scholars over whether patriarchal readings of scripture are inherent to the text itself or a product of who has read it, and in what context.²³ Al-Maududi, with his more conservative views, and Al-Qardhawi, with his more moderate approach, have shaped two distinct currents of thought within Islam. A study of their ideas is highly relevant, especially given the ongoing debate about the role of women in leadership, which continues to this day, including in Indonesia.

Examining women's leadership in the context of Indonesia, a country with the largest Muslim population, is crucial given the complex dynamics between history, social reality, and religious interpretation. With a population of 270 million, 50.3% of whom are women, Indonesia faces complex challenges in reconciling Islamic values with an ever-evolving social reality. This complexity is reflected in the persistence of social constructs rooted in societal understanding, cultural values, and interpretations of Islam that tend to be patriarchal. On one hand, Indonesian history records that women's leadership is often linked to family connections with specific male figures. On the other hand, social realities show that women remain in subordinate positions, despite their significant potential as a resource for development.²⁴

Method

To facilitate data analysis, this study employs several research methods designed to support a comprehensive examination of the topic. The research adopts a comparative approach, which involves analyzing and comparing the thoughts of Sayyid Abu A'la al-Maududi and Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi regarding women's leadership as regional heads. This approach is both descriptive and analytical, as it not only identifies similarities and differences between the two figures but also provides detailed explanations of their ideas.

This study is categorized as library research, relying entirely on written sources such as books, journals, articles, encyclopedias, official documents, and other relevant literature. It does not involve fieldwork but instead focuses on textual and conceptual analysis. The data used in this

²³ Asma Barlas, *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

²⁴ Amany Lubis, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Islam: Tinjauan Lintasan Sejarah" (Kelapa Gading: Penerbit Cendekia), 12–13.

research consist of primary sources, including al-Maududi's al-Hijab and The Islamic Law and Constitution, as well as al-Qaradawi's Fiqh Daulah. In addition, secondary data are drawn from various references such as books on fiqh, journals, and other academic writings that support and complement the primary sources.

Data collection is conducted through a literature review, which enables the researcher to gather and analyze relevant written materials systematically. Once collected, the data are processed and organized logically and coherently to ensure clarity and alignment with the study's objectives.

The data analysis combines two main methods. The descriptive analysis method is used to present and explain the ideas of both figures systematically, while the comparative analysis method is applied to evaluate the similarities, differences, and contextual relevance of their views to the reality of women's leadership in Indonesia, particularly within the 2024 regional election context. Through this combination, the researcher aims to achieve an objective understanding of each scholar's perspective and its applicability to Indonesia's socio-political landscape.

Result and Discussion

The Role and Political Participation of Women as Regional Heads in Indonesia in the 2024 Regional Elections

Women's participation in politics plays a vital role in ensuring fair and equitable representation within political decision-making. However, in Indonesia, women's political involvement remains relatively low due to the persistence of patriarchal values and traditional beliefs that diminish women's roles in the political sphere. Therefore, strengthening women's political empowerment is essential to support the country's democratic development. Active participation of women in politics contributes significantly to policy formulation, as women bring unique perspectives that help design policies addressing their specific needs and ensuring better protection. Thus, women's representation is not only a question of quantity but also of the quality and substance of their contributions to public policy.²⁵

The government has sought to improve women's political representation through Law No. 2 of 2008 on Political Parties, which requires political parties to allocate at least 30 percent of their seats for women,

²⁵ Selvia Adriani dan Siti Tiara Maulia, "Partisipasi Perempuan dalam Politik," *Journal of Practice Learning and Educational Development* 4, no. 2 (12 Juni 2024): 131.

particularly in representative institutions.²⁶ In the 2024 elections, women's representation in the House of Representatives reached its highest level in history, with women winning 127 out of 580 seats, equivalent to 22.1 percent. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), women's participation in parliament increased from 21.74 percent in 2022 to 22.46 percent in 2024. Despite this positive trend, the figure remains below the ideal target, and several challenges persist, including the absence of firm sanctions for political parties that fail to meet the 30 percent quota. Moreover, although women's representation has increased, their influence in policymaking remains limited, as they are often confined to traditional or domestic issues and rarely entrusted with strategic leadership roles.²⁷

In the 2024 regional elections, female participation increased compared to the 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020 regional elections, said Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Bima Arya Sugiarto.²⁸ The definition of participation refers to the percentage of female regional head and deputy regional head candidates out of the total number of candidates. In the 2024 regional elections, 309 women ran as candidates for regional head or deputy regional head, accounting for 19.92 percent of all candidates. This figure represents a significant increase compared to 2015, when women's participation was only 7.47 percent (124 candidates), and 2020, which reached 11 percent (161 candidates). Of the 309 female candidates in the 2024 regional elections, Bima stated that 109 of them were successful, including two governors, five deputy governors, nine mayors, 15 deputy mayors, 34 regents, and 44 deputy regents.²⁹ This data indicates that the trend of women's participation in local political contests has seen significant development. However, despite the increase in the number of female candidates and winners, the percentage remains relatively low compared to men. This highlights an important point:

²⁶ Loura Hardjaloka, "Potret Keterwakilan Perempuan dalam Wajah Politik Indonesia Perspektif Regulasi dan Implementasi," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 9, no. 2 (20 Mei 2016): 404.

²⁷ Jawahir Gustav Rizal dan Bayu Galih, "Menilik Sisi Lain Peningkatan Keterwakilan Perempuan di DPR," KOMPAS.com, 18 Maret 2025, <https://www.kompas.com/cekfakta/read/2025/03/18/114305382/menilik-sisi-lain-peningkatan-keterwakilan-perempuan-di-dpr>.

²⁸ Yosafat Diva Bagus, "Wamendagri: Partisipasi Perempuan di Pilkada 2024 Meningkat," IDN Times, diakses 10 Mei 2025, <https://www.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/yosafat-diva-bagus/wamendagri-partisipasi-perempuan-di-pilkada-2024-meningkat>.

²⁹ Vedro Imanuel Girsang, "Bima Arya Sebut Partisipasi Perempuan di Pilkada 2024 Meningkat," Tempo, 18 Maret 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/bima-arya-sebut-partisipasi-perempuan-di-pilkada-2024-meningkat-1221076>.

women's representation is still not fully proportional and requires continued support and affirmative policies.

The total number of women running as candidates for regional head and deputy regional head in the 2024 regional elections is 309, with the following breakdown: 18 women are competing for the position of governor or deputy governor, 210 women are running for the position of regent or deputy regent, and 81 women are running for the position of mayor or deputy mayor. East Java has recorded a unique phenomenon where all three gubernatorial candidates are women: Khofifah Indar Parawansa, paired with Emil Elistianto Dardak; Tri Rismaharini, paired with Zahrul Azhar Asumta (also known as Gus Hans); and Luluk Nur Hamidah, paired with Lukmanul Khakim. Although the number of female candidates has increased compared to previous elections, their overall proportion remains small, accounting for only 10 percent of total election participants, with the majority of candidates being men.³⁰ Women's participation in elections is not merely about deepening democracy but also signifies a commitment to achieving gender equality across all levels of government.³¹ Despite the continuous increase in women's participation, the dominance of men in nominations still indicates that local politics has not yet fully opened up equal opportunities for women. This presents a unique challenge in promoting more inclusive and fair leadership transformation.

In the face of intense political competition, female regional head candidates employed campaign strategies that drew attention and appealed to various segments of society. For example, Sherly Tjoanda and Sarbin Sahe, the gubernatorial candidate pair who won the 2024 regional elections in North Maluku, implemented a strategy that combined digital and conventional approaches.³² Sherly Tjoanda's campaign strategy demonstrates that the success of female candidates in political contests does not solely depend on their gender identity, but also on their ability to reach older and rural voters through local newspapers. Digital platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok) were utilized to engage with younger voters through viral content

³⁰ KBR, "Menakar Peluang Perempuan Menang di Pilkada 2024," diakses 10 Mei 2025, <https://kbrprime.id/podcast/ruang-publik/menakar-peluang-perempuan-menang-di-pilkada-2024-51838>.

³¹ Topan Yuniarto, "Pilkada Serentak 2024: Partisipasi Perempuan sebagai Calon Kepala Daerah," Kompaspedia (blog), 17 September 2024, <https://kompaspedia.kompas.id/baca/paparan-topik/pilkada-serentak-2024-partisipasi-perempuan-sebagai-calon-kepala-daerah>.

³² Najla Ayunda dkk., "Strategi Kemenangan Pasangan Calon di Pilkada Provinsi Maluku Utara 2024: Studi Kasus Pasangan Sherly Tjoanda-Sarbin Sehe," *Indonesian Journal of Social Development* 2, no. 4 (25 April 2025): 1.

and interactive sessions, which strengthened the ability to understand community needs and effectively integrate modern and traditional approaches. This approach proves that voters respond positively to campaigns that are communicative, relevant, and address real issues, rather than merely political promises.

The election of women in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections breaks down stereotypes and demonstrates that women possess the same capacity to lead and participate in politics.³³ Several factors contribute to the victory of female regional head candidates in various regions. First, this includes candidates from political dynasties, such as the wives, children, siblings, or in-laws of regional officials. For example, Sherly Tjoanda replaced her husband, who previously served as the regent of Morotai Island. Among the female regents and deputy regents who won, only Annisa Suci Ramadhani (the daughter of the former regent of Dharmasraya) is recorded as part of a political dynasty. Second, involvement in women's organizations, such as Khofifah Indar Parawansa, who has a large mass base from the women's wing of NU.³⁴ Third, incumbent status. An analysis by Kompas' Research and Development Department shows that nearly half (49%) of the 49 districts/cities led by women were won by candidates who had previously held office. These 24 incumbent female regional heads not only have a greater chance of winning but also demonstrate strong performance in their previous term. Fourth, support from large party coalitions also plays a role. Most women elected as mayors or regents in the 2024 local elections were supported by large coalitions such as KIM or KIM Plus. Examples include Illiza in Banda Aceh, Cen Sui Lan in Natuna, Ratna Machmud in Musi Rawas, and Eva Dwiana in Bandar Lampung. Fifth, regional representation is also a consideration. Female candidates are assessed based on whether they represent the characteristics or background of the community in that region.³⁵ The election of women is not merely symbolic, but the result of growing networks, experience, and public trust.

³³ MB Dewi Pancawati, "Potret Keterpilihan Perempuan di Pilkada 2024," Kompas.id, 7 Januari 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/potret-keterpilihan-perempuan-di-pilkada-2024>.

³⁴ Salma Salima H.N. dan Reine Prihandoko, "Perempuan Pemenang Pemilihan Kepala Daerah 2024," Laboratorium Indonesia 2045, 19 Februari 2025, <https://www.lab45.id/detail/294/perempuan-pemenang-pemilihan-kepala-daerah-2024>.

³⁵ MB Dewi Pancawati, Zikrina Ratri, dan Nurul Intan, "Rekam Jejak Jadi Penentu Perempuan Terpilih sebagai Kepala Daerah Hasil Pilkada 2024," Kompas.id, 27 Februari 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/rekam-jejak-jadi-penentu-perempuan-terpilih-sebagai-kepala-daerah-hasil-pilkada-2024>.

The Relevance of Sayyid Abul A'la Al-Maududi and Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi's Thoughts on Women's Leadership as Regional Heads in Indonesia

The perspectives of Al-Maududi and Al-Qaradhawi on women's leadership require analysis in light of the values of Pancasila, which serves as the foundational ideology of the Indonesian state. The first principle of Pancasila, 'Belief in One Supreme God' (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa), aligns in part with Al-Maududi's view that governance must be based on the principle of 'Theo-democracy,' where divine sovereignty is the primary foundation.³⁶ However, his literal interpretation of religious texts contradicts Indonesia's pluralistic nature. In contrast, Al-Qaradhawi's contextual interpretation of religious texts allows for a more dialogical engagement with the first principle, as he emphasizes justice and *maslahah* (public benefit) as the objectives of Sharia, which resonates with Indonesia's inclusive understanding of divinity.³⁷

The second principle of Pancasila, 'Just and Civilized Humanity,' stands in contrast to Al-Maududi's view that restricts women from becoming leaders. His stance contradicts this principle, which aligns with the role of women in advancing gender equality, as demonstrated by the significant involvement of women in various organizations and movements that advocate for gender justice, child protection, and community empowerment. Their participation in the public sphere contributes to the creation of a more just and civilized society.³⁸ Al-Qaradhawi's view, which permits women to assume public roles — including regional leadership — as long as such roles fulfill a public need and are consistent with Sharia, aligns well with the second principle.³⁹

The third principle, 'The Unity of Indonesia' (Persatuan Indonesia), appears incompatible with Al-Maududi's ideal of an Islamic state governed by a caliphate system. His exclusivist and idealist view risks polarizing Indonesia's multicultural society.⁴⁰ In contrast, Al-Qaradhawi's more

³⁶ Abul A'la Al-Maududi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, terj. Asep Hikmat (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1995), 158–163.

³⁷ Utary Noer Utami, "Analisis Tentang Kepemimpinan Perempuan Menurut Perspektif Yusuf al-Qaradhawi" (Skripsi, UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2021), i.

³⁸ Muhammad Nahrowi, "Peran Perempuan dalam Mengimplementasikan Nilai Pancasila di Masa Kini," KOMPASIANA, 6 Juli 2024, <https://www.kompasiana.com/muhammadnahrowi4863/668828d1c925c411f42dd042/peran-perempuan-dalam-mengimplementasikan-nilai-pancasila-di-masa-kini>.

³⁹ Utami, "Analisis Tentang Kepemimpinan Perempuan," i.

⁴⁰ Muhammad Choiri, "Relevansi Pemikiran Konsep Negara Ideal Menurut Abul A'la Al-Maududi di Indonesia" (Skripsi, UIN Sumatra Utara, 2016).

moderate stance supports national unity by allowing women from diverse backgrounds to lead without disregarding religious values.

The fourth principle, 'Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom of Deliberation Among Representatives' (Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan), is difficult to reconcile with Al-Maududi's position, as he considers people-based sovereignty (as in Indonesia's democracy) to be a form of shirk (associating others with God).⁴¹ He insists that political systems must be founded on divine sovereignty through Theo-democracy.⁴² This makes engagement with the fourth principle challenging — unless interpreted as emphasizing the leader's responsibility before God and the people. On the other hand, Al-Qaradhawi's flexibility in permitting female leadership in non-supreme positions supports Indonesia's democratic system, which he sees as compatible with Islam.⁴³ This resonates with the spirit of deliberation and people's participation reflected in the fourth principle.

The fifth principle of Pancasila, 'Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia,' finds limited resonance in Al-Maududi's view. Although he emphasizes justice in leadership — albeit exclusively for men — his interpretation is less relevant to the inclusive realities of Indonesia. In contrast, Al-Qaradhawi's opinion, which upholds the principles of competence and public necessity in female leadership, aligns more closely with the fifth principle. For instance, Indonesia's policy of a 30% quota for women's political representation is supported by its moderate stance, which provides theological justification for broader gender inclusivity in political participation.⁴⁴

There are several challenges in implementing the thoughts of both scholars in the Indonesian context. The primary challenge lies in: (1) Al-Maududi's restrictive interpretation; his literalist reading of religious texts is often adopted by groups that oppose female leadership. This stands in contrast to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 27(1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which affirms that "all citizens shall have equal status before the law and the government and shall be obliged to respect the law and the government without exception," as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against

⁴¹ M. Alwin Abdillah, "Demokrasi dalam Pandangan Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi," *Politica: Jurnal Hukum Tata Negara dan Politik Islam* 6, no. 2 (20 Desember 2019): 6.

⁴² Al-Maududi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, 158–163.

⁴³ Abdillah, "Demokrasi dalam Pandangan Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi," 16–17.

⁴⁴ Sri Intan Kumala Dewi, "Pro Kontra Kader Politik Perempuan di Indonesia (Studi Komparatif Pemikiran Yusuf Al-Qardhawi)," *Jayapangus Press Ganaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora* 7, no. 3 (2024): 239–241.

Women (CEDAW).⁴⁵ In regions with strong religious values, such as West Java, this restrictive religious narrative poses one of the most significant challenges.⁴⁶ (2) Al-Qaradhawi's contextualist approach: although al-Qaradhawi provides space for women to assume leadership positions outside of general leadership, including as regional heads, his moderate interpretation of religious texts has not been entirely accepted by segments of Indonesian society. For instance, in West Sumatra, despite the prevailing matrilineal system, patriarchal paradigms remain dominant.⁴⁷ (3) Socio-cultural challenges: media coverage often reflects gender bias. Instead of highlighting competence, media narratives surrounding female regional leaders tend to focus on their marital status or physical appearance. Moreover, female regional heads are frequently confronted with the assumption that they will struggle to balance domestic and public responsibilities. For example, Anne Ratna Mustika, the Regent of Purwakarta, was once criticized for being insufficiently focused on her duties due to presumed burdens from household matters. (4) Structural barriers: at the local level, political party support for female candidates in regional elections is often weak, especially when the candidate lacks connections to party elites or substantial financial resources. Furthermore, the nomination process for women in regional elections is frequently dominated by political elites or dynastic networks. For instance, Faida, the Regent of Jember, was once impeached by the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), an affiliate of the party that had initially supported her candidacy, indicating the presence of internal party dynamics that may undermine the position of female regional leaders.⁴⁸

The thoughts of these two scholars can serve as a foundation for developing a more inclusive and contextual model of female leadership. Al-Maududi, with his restrictive and literalist interpretation, views public leadership roles for women as limited. When applied rigidly, this perspective may reinforce cultural and religious views that continue to question women's eligibility for leadership, ultimately hindering their political participation at the regional level. In contrast, Yusuf al-Qaradhawi offers a more moderate and contextual approach, which provides greater opportunities for women to serve as regional heads, provided they possess adequate competence and are

⁴⁵ Farhan Istiqlal, "Analisis Strategi Perempuan dalam Mendapatkan Kepemimpinan Politik di Sumatera Barat" (Institut Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri: Program Studi Politik Indonesia Terapan), 2.

⁴⁶ Novitasari, Roni, dan Ardiansa, *Kepemimpinan Politik Delapan Kepala Daerah Perempuan*, 6.

⁴⁷ Istiqlal, "Analisis Strategi Perempuan," 2.

⁴⁸ Novitasari, Roni, dan Ardiansa, *Kepemimpinan Politik Delapan Kepala Daerah Perempuan*, 6.

capable of addressing societal needs. This approach is considered more aligned with the development of democracy and the principles of gender equality in Indonesia, and it supports affirmative policy efforts, such as the implementation of gender quotas in politics. His view is in line with the idea that Islamic legal reasoning (ijtihad) must evolve along with political realities, especially in Muslim-majority democracies such as Indonesia.⁴⁹

Thus, female leadership as regional heads is not in contradiction with Islamic law, especially when viewed through the moderate and contextual approach offered by Yusuf al-Qaradawi. He emphasizes that men and women are spiritually equal in receiving rewards for their righteous deeds. Moreover, there is no explicit prohibition in the Qur'an regarding women holding public leadership positions. In the evolving socio-political context, the presence of women in leadership roles is not only permissible but also often necessary, serving as a meaningful contribution to society. As long as it is carried out with sincere intention, within the bounds of Shari'ah, and without neglecting primary responsibilities within the family, female leadership can be considered a righteous deed (amal salih) that holds spiritual merit in the sight of Allah SWT.

Conclusion

The 2024 regional elections in Indonesia saw a notable 90% increase in female candidates, totaling 309 (19.92%), yet male dominance remains strong. Successful female candidates often had strong educational and political backgrounds, with support from dynasties, women's groups, or major parties. Key challenges included the lack of gender quota laws, money politics, and stigma. Despite these challenges, female leadership at the regional level has shown a positive impact on gender equality and inclusive development, demonstrating women's equal capacity to lead.

Al-Maududi and Yusuf al-Qaradawi both base their views on the Qur'an and Hadith, but differ in interpretation. Al-Maududi employs a textualist approach that restricts women's roles, whereas al-Qaradawi's contextualist view permits female leadership at the regional level. In Indonesia's democratic and Muslim-majority context, al-Qaradawi's thought is more relevant, aligning with national values like social justice and deliberation. His perspective also supports religious legitimacy for women's political participation, including the 30% gender quota. Therefore, female leadership is not contrary to Islam, primarily based on al-Qaradawi's moderate view.

⁴⁹ Asep Saepudin Jahar, "Legal Reform in Indonesia: An Overview of Legal and Institutional Reform (1998–2003)," *Studia Islamika* 11, no. 3 (2004): 415.

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