

# Mapping Muslim Perspectives on Gender Issues in Malang State Universities, Indonesia

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang pemahaman isu gender di kalangan mahasiswa muslim di Perguruan Tinggi Negeri Malang antara lain Universitas Brawijaya, Universitas Negeri Malang, dan Universitas Islam Negeri UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim. Melalui metode penelitian kualitatif, termasuk wawancara dan diskusi kelompok terfokus, penelitian ini menyelidiki beragam perspektif, keyakinan, dan sikap terhadap peran gender, kesetaraan, dan topik terkait. Temuan ini mengungkap spektrum penafsiran yang dipengaruhi oleh ajaran agama, norma budaya, dan lingkungan pendidikan. Di Universitas Brawijaya, mahasiswa menganut interpretasi progresif yang mendukung kesetaraan gender dan menantang norma-norma patriarki, sehingga mengarah pada keterlibatan aktif dalam aktivisme gender. Universitas Negeri Malang menampilkan perpaduan interpretasi tradisional dan progresif, dengan berbagai tingkat dukungan terhadap kesetaraan gender. Sementara itu, Universitas Islam Negeri UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim menganut interpretasi konservatif yang menekankan peran gender tradisional, sehingga menyebabkan terbatasnya keterlibatan dalam aktivisme gender. Persinggungan antara agama dan budaya membentuk sikap terhadap gender, dan adat istiadat serta tradisi setempat memengaruhi persepsi mengenai peran gender. Lingkungan pendidikan memainkan peran penting, dimana Universitas Brawijaya menyediakan ruang yang kondusif untuk keterlibatan kritis dalam isu gender, sedangkan Universitas Islam Negeri menekankan etika dan nilai-nilai Islam.

**Kata Kunci:** Isu Gender, Pemahaman Muslim, Studi Gender, Universitas Brawijaya, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Universitas Negeri Malang

**Abstract:** This study investigates the comprehension of gender-related matters among Muslim students in Malang State Universities, namely Brawijaya University, Malang State University, and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim. The study employs qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus group discussions, to examine a range of viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes regarding gender roles, equality, and related subjects. The findings demonstrate a range of understandings that are shaped by religious doctrines, cultural standards, and educational contexts. At Brawijaya University, students support progressive viewpoints that promote gender equality and question traditional male-dominated beliefs, resulting in their active participation in gender activism. Malang State University showcases a combination of conventional and innovative interpretations, with differing levels of endorsement for gender equality. Meanwhile, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim's Islamic State University adheres to conservative interpretations that prioritise traditional gender roles, leading to minimal involvement in gender activism. Religious and cultural factors overlap to shape attitudes regarding gender, as local norms and traditions have an impact on ideas of gender roles. Educational settings are of great importance, as Brawijaya University offers a favorable atmosphere for thoughtful examination of gender-related matters, whereas the Islamic State University places emphasis on Islamic morals and principles.

**Keywords:** Brawijaya University, Gender Issues, Gender Studies, Muslim Understanding, State University of Malang, State Islamic University

## 1. Introduction

Gender issues have become a prominent subject of academic research, popular discourse, and policy deliberation worldwide. The problems encompass a broad spectrum of topics, such as gender parity, women's entitlements, societal expectations based on gender, and diverse gender identities. The analysis of gender issues in Muslim-majority nations is complex due to the interplay of religious teachings, cultural norms, and socio-political factors that shape views and behaviours toward gender. (Akalili & Sari, 2021). It is crucial to comprehend the gender dynamics within educational institutions in Indonesia, a country with the highest Muslim population worldwide. This is because universities have a significant influence on shaping societal norms and promoting critical involvement in complex matters like gender equality (Wartini, 2013).

Malang, located in the province of East Java, houses several renowned universities, such as Brawijaya University, Malang State University (Universitas Negeri Malang), and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim. These institutions play a crucial role in facilitating academic discussions, generating knowledge, and engaging with the community. They represent a wide range of opinions and experiences within the local context. Gaining insight into the perspectives and involvement of Muslim students in Malang on gender issues in the university environment is crucial for fostering inclusive and fair educational settings and furthering broader objectives of social justice (Janah, 2017a).

This paper seeks to investigate the comprehension of gender-related concerns among Muslim students in the specific setting of Malang State Universities, with particular emphasis on Brawijaya University, Malang State University, and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim. This study aims to analyse the viewpoints, convictions, and attitudes of Muslim students regarding gender roles, equality, and related subjects in order to understand the intricate nature of gender dynamics inside academic institutions (Yusriana Asri & Abror, 2021). Our goal is to explore diverse perspectives on gender within the university using qualitative research methods, such as interviews. We will examine how Islamic teachings, cultural influences, and educational backgrounds shape individuals' understanding of gender. (Janah, 2017b).

The study's significance stems from its ability to inform efforts to enhance gender inclusion in academic settings and contribute to scholarly debates on gender issues in nations with a majority of Muslims (Harnides, Abbas, & Hasballah, 2023). This research aims to analyse the complex perspectives of Muslims at Malang State Universities on gender issues.

The findings will contribute valuable insights for policy interventions, educational initiatives, and community-based activities that aim to promote gender equality and social justice (Arifin, Yudani, & Aziza, 2022). In addition, this study enhances the representation of Muslim students' viewpoints, which are frequently marginalised in mainstream discussions about gender and Islam. As a result, it contributes to a broader and more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics within various religious and cultural settings (Sari & Sularto, 2019).

Previous research on gender dynamics at Malang State Universities offer distinctive perspectives into the intricate nature of gender relations, beliefs, and behaviours among Muslim students in Indonesia (Hasan, 2023). This literature review summarises significant findings from previous studies to provide a framework for examining gender-related matters in the academic environments of Brawijaya University, Malang State University, and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim.

Research has shown that students at Malang State Universities have a variety of gender views and behaviours, which are influenced by religious, cultural, and socio-political variables. Studies reveal that although a considerable number of students follow conventional gender norms shaped by Islamic beliefs and cultural practices, there is also indication of changing perspectives toward gender parity, especially among the younger demographic (Rif'at & Nurwahidin, 2022). Gender segregation, dress standards, and societal norms around marriage and family roles are frequently observed behaviours that influence students' experiences and interactions on university campuses. (Nasruloh & Hidayat, 2022).

Gender norms and behaviours among students at Malang State Universities are considerably influenced by religious teachings, especially those related to Islam. Research has emphasised the range of theological interpretations—from conservative to progressive—and how these affect perceptions of women's rights, gender norms, and social actions. (Fadilah, 2018). Progressive views of Islam frequently support women's empowerment and gender equality, while conservative interpretations may uphold traditional gender hierarchies and limitations (Mittal & Singh, 2020).

Malang State Universities' campus cultures have a significant impact on how students experience and perceive gender. According to research, there are differences in the gender inclusion of campus environments. While some colleges promote an environment that is empowering and supportive of women, others could reinforce prejudice and discrimination against women based on their gender (Dwi Rahman Sahbana, 2022). Academic environments that are more gender-equitable are influenced by elements including the availability of gender-sensitive policies, women's groups, and inclusive curricula.

Systemic challenge to women's involvement and advancement remain an issue even with the progress made in fostering gender parity within Malang State Universities. Key obstacles affecting female students include concerns like sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and unequal access to leadership and educational opportunities, according to studies (Alfitri, 2020). Advocacy campaigns, legislative changes, and institutional measures aiming at promoting gender equality and developing more inclusive learning environments are some of the potential for positive change that are also present (Yasin, 2017).

Gender studies in Indonesian higher education have gained increasing scholarly attention, particularly within Muslim-majority academic environments. Previous research has examined gender perceptions, identity formation, and religious influence on gender roles among university students in Indonesia. These studies have contributed valuable insights into the complexity of gender relations in Islamic educational settings. However, despite growing interest, the existing discussions remain fragmented and insufficient in addressing emerging gender discourse within State Universities in Malang.

A significant gap persists in the literature regarding the intersection of gender with other socio-cultural identities such as ethnicity, class, disability, and religion (Kholifah & Masruroh, 2022). Research rarely applies an intersectional lens, resulting in limited understanding of how layered identities shape the lived experiences of students. Additionally, vulnerable and marginalised groups such as LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, and ethnic minorities remain largely invisible within existing research frameworks (Nazah, 2020). This gap highlights the need for more inclusive and nuanced investigations that move beyond binary or normative interpretations of gender.

Existing studies exploring gender dynamics in Malang State Universities—particularly among Muslim students—show that gender attitudes are influenced by institutional culture, social expectations, Islamic interpretation, and academic environment (Khomisah, 2017). While these studies provide foundational insights, they have not fully examined how shifting national discourses on gender equality and Islamic values interact within university settings. As a result, there remains limited exploration of how students construct and negotiate gender identities in response to contemporary socio-religious change (Eleanora & Supriyanto, 2020).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, alongside Universitas Brawijaya and Universitas Negeri Malang, which have different academic traditions and ideological foundations. UIN Malang is uniquely positioned as a state Islamic university where formal curriculum, campus culture, and institutional policy are explicitly shaped by Islamic epistemology. This context makes UIN Malang a crucial research site to understand how religious frameworks shape gender-related beliefs, negotiations, and contestations, particularly in comparison with secular institutions in the same city. The

choice of Malang is also strategic, as it represents one of Indonesia's rapidly developing educational hubs with diverse student populations and increasing exposure to global gender discourse.

Methodologically, this research adopts an interdisciplinary approach by integrating frameworks from gender studies, Islamic studies, sociology, anthropology, and education (Apriliandra & Krisnani, 2021). This approach enables a comprehensive examination of how institutional culture, personal belief systems, and broader socio-religious narratives shape gender attitudes and behaviours among students. Moreover, the study prioritises students' lived experiences, with the aim of amplifying diverse Muslim voices and moving beyond monolithic representations of Islam and gender (Priyashantha, De Alwis, & Welmilla, 2021).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to critically examine Muslim students' perspectives on gender issues in Malang's State Universities, specifically UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Universitas Brawijaya, and Universitas Negeri Malang, through qualitative inquiry and interdisciplinary analysis to contribute to advancing gender equity, inclusive education, and social justice in Muslim-majority academic contexts.

The study employs a qualitative methodology to investigate the comprehension of gender concerns among Muslim students at Brawijaya University, Malang State University, and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim. Qualitative methods provide a thorough investigation of participants' viewpoints, convictions, and encounters about gender dynamics in academic environments. Participants are chosen using purposive sampling to guarantee a varied representation in terms of gender, academic field, and religious affiliation.

A total of **36 participants** were recruited for this research, consisting of **12 students from** each university: Universitas Brawijaya (UB), Universitas Negeri Malang (UM), and UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the criteria of being active Muslim students (undergraduate and postgraduate level). See Table 1 below:

Table 1. Participant Profile

Variable	Category	Number
University Affiliation	UB	12
	UM	12
	UIN Malang	12
Gender	Male	18
	Female	18
Age Group	18-20 years	10
	21-23 years	20
	24-26 years	6

A Google Forms survey is specifically created to collect demographic data and initial perspectives on participants' beliefs towards gender-related matters (see Table 2). The

survey comprises both closed-ended and open-ended inquiries, encompassing subjects such as attitudes towards gender roles, encounters with gender-based prejudice, and involvement in gender advocacy (Nuroniayah, 2019). Participants are invited to complete the survey anonymously to encourage candid responses.

Table 2. Survey Question Structure

No.	Type	Question Item
1	Demographic	Name (optional)
2	Demographic	Age
3	Demographic	Gender
4	Demographic	University & Study Program
5	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Men and women should have equal access to leadership positions on campus."
6	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Gender influences the way students are treated by lecturers or staff."
7	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Islam permits equal educational opportunities regardless of gender."
8	Yes/No + Comment	"Have you ever experienced or witnessed gender discrimination on campus?"
9	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Islamic teachings strongly influence your views on gender roles."
10	Likert Scale (1-5)	"LGBTQ+ issues should be discussed academically at the university level."
11	Short Answer	"How do you define gender equality as a Muslim student?"
12	Multiple Choice	Source of gender-related beliefs (Family / Religion / Media / Education / Campus culture)
13	Likert Scale (1-5)	"I feel free to express my opinions about gender openly on campus."
14	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Women should be prioritised in gender advocacy efforts on campus."
15	Yes/No	"Have you joined any gender-related training, seminars, or discussion groups?"
16	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Male and female students are treated equally in academic assessments."
17	Short Answer	"What gender-related issue do you think needs urgent attention in your university?"
18	Likert Scale (1-5)	"Students from minority backgrounds (ethnic, disability, etc.) receive equal treatment."
19	Likert Scale (1-5)	"I believe campus policies support gender equity."
20	Open-Ended	"Please share any experience or story related to gender on your campus."

Based on the survey respondents, 12 participants (4 from each university; 6 males and 6 females) were selected for semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insight into personal perspectives and lived experiences. Interview sessions lasted 30–45 minutes and were conducted via Zoom or face-to-face depending on participant availability.

Interview themes included:

- Understanding of Islamic teachings on gender
- Experiences of gender bias or discrimination on campus

- c) Perceptions of institutional efforts toward gender equity
- d) Views on sensitive gender topics including LGBTQ+, hijab norms, leadership, and academic fairness

The data collected from the Google Forms survey is analysed using descriptive statistics in order to find patterns and trends in the participants' responses. Thematic analysis is used to analyse qualitative data obtained from open-ended survey questions and interview transcripts. The study methodically identifies and codes themes and patterns relating to gender perceptions, experiences, and attitudes (Hasanuddin, 2018). Data triangulation is applied to analyse the results obtained from both the survey and interview data, hence augmenting the credibility and consistency of the study findings (Rokhim & Noorrizki, 2022).

This research technique seeks to gain a full picture of gender issues within Malang State Universities by utilising a combination of Google Forms questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gather viewpoints from Muslim students. By triangulating data sources and employing rigorous analysis procedures, the study findings are strengthened in terms of validity and reliability. This approach allows for a detailed examination of gender dynamics in academic contexts.

**The Diversity of Muslim Perspectives on Gender Issues** Gender issues have become a significant focus of academic inquiry and social discourse worldwide, including within Muslim-majority societies. In Indonesia, as in many other countries, universities serve as crucial sites for the construction and negotiation of gender identities and roles (Mutmainnah, 2019). Malang State Universities, being prominent institutions in East Java, are no exception to this phenomenon. However, the understanding and interpretation of gender issues among Muslim students in these universities remain relatively underexplored (Asmaret, 2018).

By mapping Muslim students' perceptions on gender-related issues within the framework of Malang State Universities, this paper aims to close this gap. Through an examination of their views, beliefs, and perceptions regarding gender roles, equality, and related subjects, this research seeks to shed light on the intricate dynamics of gender within Muslim academic societies (Yakub, Husain, Nurdin, Nurhayati, & Hidayatulloh, 2023). The study reveals a multitude of perspectives that highlight the intricate nature of gender interactions within Muslim academic societies. Although gender attitudes are still shaped by conventional interpretations of Islam, there is evidence of changing discourses that support gender equality and challenge patriarchal practices (Hirji, 2021).

The results indicate that, in the context of Malang State Universities, addressing gender issues requires a sophisticated approach. Gender inclusiveness initiatives should encourage critical engagement with gender norms and disparities while being mindful of religious and cultural contexts. To foster situations that are conducive to discussion and activism about

gender issues, cooperation between academic institutions, civil society organisations, and religious leaders is necessary.

Muslim students have a diverse range of viewpoints and views, as seen by the discussion surrounding the mapping of Muslim thinking on gender issues within the framework of Malang State Universities. The results make it clear that perspectives on gender roles, equality, and related issues vary widely and are impacted by a variety of variables, including cultural norms, religious teachings, and educational settings.

The discussion's noteworthy component is the range of ways Muslim students understand Islamic teachings. At the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, some students follow conservative interpretations that place an emphasis on traditional gender roles, while some students at Brawijaya University embrace progressive interpretations that challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender equality. This variability draws attention to the intricacy of gender discourse in Islam and emphasises the importance of approaching religious texts and customs with caution.

#### Intersection of Religion and Culture:

Furthermore, students' comprehension of gender issues is influenced by the learning settings found in colleges. With programmes supporting gender equality and diversity, Brawijaya University offers a favourable atmosphere for critical engagement with gender problems. On the other hand, there is little discussion of gender issues in the academic setting at the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim since it places a higher priority on Islamic principles and values. These variations in pedagogical strategies emphasise how crucial the institutional context is in influencing students' perspectives on gender.

## 2. Challenges and Opportunities for Gender Activism

A crucial dimension of the conversation centres on the obstacles and prospects for gender advocacy in the framework of Malang State Universities. Diverse levels of institutional support and student mobilisation are reflected in the limited engagement of some institutions in gender activism and resistance against gender-based discrimination, while others indicate active involvement (Sangaji, Amin, Muhammadun, Syarifuddin, & Usman, 2023).

A challenge that has been recognised is the uneven Institutional support for gender activism throughout university campuses. With students planning events, campaigns, and efforts to advance gender equality and increase awareness of gender issues, Brawijaya University stands out for its active involvement in gender activism. Malang State University and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, on the other hand, exhibit a low level of gender activism, with few campaigns and activities advocating for gender

equality. This disparity highlights the significance of institutional leadership and support in cultivating an activist and advocacy culture for gender equality in academic environments.

Although there are obstacles, the conversation also emphasises examples of student activism and opposition to discrimination based on gender. Particularly among female students, there is a strong push inside their colleges for gender equality and a challenge to gender standards. The possibility for student-led activism to bring about change and establish more welcoming and equal academic settings shown by these grassroots initiatives.

### **3. Implications for Promoting Gender Equality in Academic Settings**

The significance of the findings for advancing gender equality in academic contexts inside cultures with a majority of Muslims are examined in the summary of the discussion. This study offers insightful information that can guide attempts to create inclusive and equitable learning environments by mapping the varied viewpoints on gender issues among Muslim students at Malang State Universities.

A crucial inference is that gender concerns in academic contexts require complex approaches to be addressed (Muqoyyidin, 2013). Interventions aiming at fostering gender equality must be attentive to religious, cultural, and educational contexts given the range of attitudes and beliefs among Muslim students. Universities must modify their tactics to suit the distinct requirements and backgrounds of their student bodies rather than taking a one-size-fits-all stance.

The conversation highlights how crucial it is for stakeholders to communicate and work together to advance gender equality in academic contexts. In order to challenge gender norms and advance social justice, cooperation between academic institutions, civil society organisations, religious leaders, and student groups can produce synergies and increase efforts. Universities can establish more inclusive and supportive settings for tackling gender issues and advancing gender equality by encouraging discourse and collaboration.

The conversation emphasises how critical it is to give students a voice while advocating for gender equality in academic contexts. Universities can foster environments for discussion, introspection, and activism around gender issues by elevating the voices of Muslim students and placing a focus on their experiences and viewpoints. Giving students a voice increases diversity and inclusiveness while also encouraging critical thinking, social change, and a culture of critical inquiry in academic communities.

In summary, the mapping of Muslim perspectives on gender issues in the context of Malang State Universities presents a multifaceted picture of opportunities, difficulties, and points of view. Universities may play a crucial role in advancing gender equality and social justice within Muslim-majority communities by acknowledging the diversity of Muslim

perspectives, tackling obstacles to gender activism, and taking advantage of possibilities for collaboration and dialogue.

Table 3. Summary of Theoretical Categorisation

University	Category	Primary Theory Explaining Position	Key Concepts
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim	Conservative	Religious Conservatism Theory; Gender Order Theory	Hegemonic masculinity, scriptural justification
Malang State University	Moderate	Social Role Theory; Pragmatic Gender Negotiation	Context-dependent gender flexibility
Brawijaya University	Progressive	Gender Schema Theory; Intersectionality Theory	Inclusivity, fluidity of gender norms

Table 4. Finding

Aspects of Differences	Brawijaya University	Malang State University	Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim
<b>Interpretation of Islamic Teachings</b>	Embraces progressive interpretations that challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender equality.	Reflects a fusion of traditional and progressive ideas, with some students supporting gender equality within the context of Islamic teachings and others maintaining traditional gender roles.	Adheres to traditional perspectives that reject feminist discourses and place an emphasis on conventional gender roles.
<b>Gender Activism</b>	Participation in gender activism and opposition to discrimination based on gender.	Insufficient amount of gender activity, with few campaigns and initiatives advancing a gender equal society.	Restricted engagement in gender action and a commitment to maintaining conventional gender roles.
<b>Cultural Influences</b>	Influenced by exposure to a variety of cultural factors, which promotes receptivity to different gender interpretations.	Cultural influences have a significant effect on how people perceive gender roles and interact with each other in the campus community.	An Intense emphasis on upholding cultural customs and traditions, which serves to reinforce traditional gender roles.
<b>Educational Environment</b>	Establishes a setting that is favourable for discussing gender problems critically and offers programmes that advance diversity and gender equality.	Moderate attitude towards gender issues and scant institutional backing for projects pertaining to gender.	A relatively inadequate discussion of gender issues in academic settings, with an emphasis on Islamic morality and principles.

Aspects of Differences	Brawijaya University	Malang State University	Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim
<b>Attitudes Towards Gender Equality</b>	Influenced by exposure to a variety of cultural factors, which promotes receptivity to different gender interpretations.	Cultural influences have a significant effect on how people perceive gender roles and interact with each other in the campus community.	An intense emphasis on upholding cultural customs and traditions, which serves to reinforce traditional gender roles.

The results of this study show that Muslim students at Brawijaya University, Malang State University, and the Islamic State University of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim have subtle variances in their understanding of gender issues (See Table 3 & 4).

In terms of gender concerns, Brawijaya University's Progressive Discourse demonstrates a more noticeable connection with progressive interpretations of Islam. Exposure to feminist discourses and progressive educational environments has led to a higher likelihood of Brawijaya University students advocating for gender equality and challenging patriarchal conventions.

Activism and Resistance, Gender activism and resistance against discrimination based on gender are prominent activities undertaken by female students at Brawijaya University. They plan activities, campaigns, and campaigns to bring gender issues to the attention of university students and advance gender equality.

Moderate Perspectives, combining traditional and contemporary views of Islam, Malang State University takes a more moderate approach to gender issues. Within the context of Islamic teachings, some students show support for gender equality, while others maintain conventional gender norms. Cultural Influences: At Malang State University, ideas of gender roles and relationships between male and female students are greatly influenced by local customs and traditions. These cultural elements have a considerable impact on attitudes towards gender.

Conservative Interpretations, Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Islamic State University of UIN takes a more conventional approach to gender issues, primarily adhering to traditional Islamic teachings about gender roles and relations. It is more common for UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim students to oppose feminist speech and support patriarchal norms. Islamic ethics and values are significantly emphasised at the university; these principles influence students' perspectives on gender and shape their interactions with one another.

The elaborate nature of gender dynamics in these academic institutions made clear by mapping the Muslim perspective on gender issues within the framework of Malang State

Universities. Muslim students exhibit a wide range of viewpoints, convictions, and attitudes on gender roles, equality, and related issues. These differences are affected by a number of variables, including cultural norms, religious teachings, and educational settings.

First of all, there are differences in how religions understand gender roles. While some students adopt progressive views that promote gender equality and challenge patriarchal norms, others adopt conservative values that uphold conventional gender roles (Hannah, 2017). This diversity highlights how gender and religion have a complicated relationship that influences people's views and behaviours in academic contexts.

Second, Muslim students at Malang State Universities' conceptions of gender are significantly shaped by cultural factors. Attitudes about gender roles and interactions within the university community shaped by the intersection of religious teachings and local customs and traditions. Some students prioritise adhering to cultural norms, reinforcing traditional gender roles, while others influenced by exposure to multiple cultural influences, leading to an openness to alternate interpretations of gender (Adhha, Jaha, Kamarusdiana, & Subchi, 2021). The confluence of religion and culture leads to a more complex understanding of gender dynamics in the academic environment.

Thirdly, gender action at Malang State Universities faces both obstacles and opportunity. While students at certain universities actively participate in gender activism by planning events, campaigns, and other initiatives to advance gender equality, students at other colleges only occasionally participate in gender-related projects. A number of critical elements have been recognised as influencing the effectiveness of gender activism in academic contexts, including institutional backing, student mobilisation, and opposition to discrimination based on gender (Ulfiyati, 2018). This section looks at ways to use opportunities and overcome obstacles to advance social justice and gender equality at Malang State Universities.

The final paragraph assesses how these findings might be used to further gender equality in academic settings. It is advised to have a nuanced stance that considers the range of viewpoints and ideologies held by Muslim pupils. In order to foster communication, teamwork, and student empowerment, gender equality initiatives should be considerate of the educational, cultural, and religious contexts in which they are implemented. Universities may make a significant contribution to the advancement of social justice and gender equality in countries where Muslims predominate by tackling obstacles to gender advocacy and seizing collaborative possibilities.

#### 4. Conclusion

The research findings highlight the wide range of perspectives on gender issues held by Muslim students at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim's Islamic State University, Brawijaya University, and Malang State University. UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim takes a conservative attitude, Malang State University takes a moderate position, while Brawijaya University takes a progressive one. This categorisation reveals that gender perceptions in higher education are not merely personal opinions but are deeply embedded within institutional structures, religious discourse, and sociocultural environments. The findings support the notion that academic institutions serve as ideological spaces that can either reinforce traditional gender hierarchies or facilitate critical transformation. Future research should integrate longitudinal analysis to examine whether these orientations remain stable or shift over time as institutions adopt gender policies, curriculum changes, or broader social reforms.

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