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## **Gender equality study on inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society**

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**Abstract:** In Gorontalo society, women often face challenges related to status, rights and roles in the context of inheritance. The differences in Islamic attitudes (law) towards men and women regarding the distribution of inheritance are not intended as discrimination and are not intended to glorify one and demean the other. However, what happens is that interpretations of religious texts often cause division and prolonged conflict when inheritance disputes are not resolved. The research method used is a phenomenological survey methodology to trace the practice of inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society. This study uses primary and secondary data sources to ensure comprehensive research. The results of the study show that the gap in the distribution of inheritance that often occurs in Gorontalo society is the amount or portion received by male heirs with female heirs. This cannot be separated from the influence of three applicable inheritance law systems, namely customary inheritance law, Islamic inheritance law and inheritance law according to the Civil Code. Distribution is carried out based on customary law or state law is considered contrary to Islamic law, on the other hand when the distribution is carried out according to Islamic law it is considered unfair to female heirs. By examining inheritance practices from a gender equality perspective, we can reveal gaps or injustice in the distribution of inheritance, especially between male and female heirs, and provide a form of conflict mitigation through the concepts of Conflict Management and Conflict Transformation.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, distribution of inheritance, conflict management, conflict transformation.

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### **Introduction**

In Indonesia, with its diverse tribes and customs, inheritance issues have many variations in their implementation. Each tribe generally adheres to its own customary laws, although its members adhere to a particular religion that also has its own rules regarding inheritance. In the context of Islam, discussions regarding inheritance are delivered firmly, clearly, and in detail. The main goal is to ensure justice for all heirs and prevent disputes between them (Ikhwanudin, 2023). The concept of equality is often associated with efforts to achieve equality in rights and responsibilities between men and women. The rationality of the Quranic doctrine on the issue of gender equality lies in the understanding of equality. If equality means that everything must be the same, then of course in some verses it appears to be discriminatory against women. However, if equality is defined professionally, then the differences in status, law, rights and obligations between men and women cannot be considered discriminatory (Nurjan & Uyun, 2020). In Indonesia, the inheritance distribution system is based on Islamic law, civil law and customary law (Permana, 2018). In Gorontalo society, the distribution of inheritance initially came from the cultural values of the local community, but with the entry of Islam, it had a lot of influence on customary law including inheritance practices as the principle of Gorontalo customary law *adati hula-*

*hula'a to syara'a, syara'a hula-hula'a to kitabi* (customary law is based on sharia law and sharia law is based on the Qur'an and hadith). This principle is the basis for Gorontalo society in resolving the issue of inheritance distribution. But then this changed due to the Dutch legal policy with its legal theory (*teori resceptie in complexu* dan *teori receptie*), so that the distribution of inheritance was influenced by three legal systems. On the other hand, gender equality activists have their own views regarding the fairness of the distribution system based on the proportions received by men and women.

The inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society remains a complex issue with various problems. One challenge involves practices that violate Islamic law. Another issue arises from inheritance distribution that relies solely on deliberation among family members, which can lead to disagreements. Delays in inheritance distribution are also common, often caused by family conflicts or unclear legal frameworks. In some cases, there are even wills explicitly stating that inheritance should not be distributed. Additionally, power dynamics between parents and their children significantly influence how inheritance is allocated. A particularly concerning issue is the gap in inheritance distribution between sons and daughters, reflecting deeper cultural and social inequalities.

In fact, the majority of Gorontalo society is Muslim and has customary principles that are sourced from the Qur'an and hadith. Gorontalo society highly upholds customs including inheritance practices. SA Lasori's research study shows a fairly high number of inheritance disputes every year and one of the contributions to the high number of inheritance disputes in Gorontalo is related to the unfair gender equality of inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society. Girls often face challenges related to their status, rights, and roles, particularly in the context of inheritance distribution within Gorontalo society, where cultural and theological interpretations often lead to unequal treatment. (Lasori, 2021).

The customary principles derived from the Qur'an and hadith should reflect their existence in the implementation of the distribution of inheritance according to Islam in Gorontalo society by remaining rational, not contradicting the sharia and not causing harm (Pongoliu, 2019). However, in reality, the distribution is done through deliberation, the distribution of assets depends on the heirs, the excessive view of the rights of men and women, and the dynamics of the power relations between the parents who own the assets and their children who are appointed as heirs. Often gives rise to injustice for women in the distribution of inheritance.

Referring to several research studies on gender equality in the distribution of inheritance, for example, the study conducted by Hazairin in the concept of mawali which gives equal status to grandchildren from sons and daughters (Darwis & Agusnidar, 2014). Then Munawir Sjadzali as in Muchammad Hammad's (2015) research entitled *Inheritance And Wasiat In Islamic Law: Study of the Thoughts of Hazairin and Munawir Sjadzali* where in the study Munawir Sjadzali conducted comprehensive *ijtihad*, which is a process of independent legal reasoning that aims to equalize the rights of men and women based on a humanitarian perspective. Then Sugiri Permana's (2018) research entitled "Gender Equality in *Ijtihad* of Inheritance Law in Indonesia" which examines the application of inheritance law in the context of gender equality. It is emphasized that in Islam, men and women are considered equal and have the same opportunity to do good deeds. However, there has been no research that refers to the study of gender equality with a conflict management and conflict transformation approach.

Based on this, the formulation of the problem that will be raised in this study is obtained, namely (1) How is inheritance distributed in Gorontalo society? (2) What is the View of Gender Equality on Inheritance Distribution Methods in Gorontalo Society? (3) How is the concept of developing gender equality in the inheritance distribution system of the Gorontalo community?

### **Method**

The research used is a qualitative phenomenological methodology. Qualitative phenomenological research is research that seeks to understand the various problems that exist in society and clarify the implications of society (Helaluddin, 2018). The phenomenological approach was chosen because the main objective of this study is to understand the subjective experiences and meanings given by individuals related to gender and inheritance distribution. Phenomenology is very suitable for use in this study because it focuses on direct human experience in a particular social and cultural context. In this study, the phenomenological approach allows researchers to explore in depth the perceptions, meanings, and experiences of individuals regarding gender issues and inheritance distribution which are often rooted in local cultural values, religions, and traditions.

This study uses a purposive sampling technique, where informants are deliberately selected based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research topic. Informants consist of individuals who have direct experience related to gender issues and inheritance distribution, such as legal experts, religious leaders, and communities who have experienced inheritance distribution. Data validity in this study was carried out using the data triangulation method, which involves comparing information from various sources, such as interviews, supporting documents, and field observations.

This study uses primary and secondary data sources to ensure a comprehensive investigation. Primary data were collected directly through in-depth interviews with selected informants. Interviews were conducted using pre-prepared interview guidelines, but still provided flexibility for further exploration. In addition, researchers conducted direct observations of relevant social contexts. Secondary data were obtained from supporting documents, such as legal documents, local policies, scientific articles, and reports related to the distribution of inheritance in the community. This secondary data was used to strengthen the primary data and provide additional context.

Data analysis was carried out through qualitative descriptive analysis with inductive, deductive and comparative interpretations (Saleh, 2017) Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method including the following steps: 1) Data transcription: Interview data was recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure no information was lost. 2) Data reduction: Researchers sorted data based on their relevance to the focus of the study, grouping data into certain categories or themes. 3) Coding: Relevant data was coded based on emerging themes, such as themes related to gender, inheritance distribution, and cultural values. 4) Data interpretation: Researchers analyzed data using an inductive approach (identifying patterns from data) and deductive (referring to the theoretical framework used). 5) Validation of findings: The final findings were re-checked through triangulation and discussion with experts to ensure the appropriateness of the interpretation.

### **Results and Discussion**

In Gorontalo society, the principle of *al-'adah al-muḥakkamah* is known, reflected in the concept that custom (*hula-hula'a to syara'a*) comes from sharia law, while sharia law (*syara'a hula-hula'a to kitab*) comes from the Qur'an, hadith, ijmak, and qiyas. This shows that the customs of the Gorontalo people have been filtered through the teachings of the Qur'an, hadith, ijmak, and qiyas. Therefore, custom can be considered as part of *al-'adah al-muḥakkamah*, namely custom which is used as a legal reference in resolving various community problems. This is evidence that Islam recognizes the effective role of customs in interpreting law. In Gorontalo language, custom is simply called "*adati*" which means customary law. According to A. Qodri Azizy, customary law is more accurately interpreted as customary law that develops and applies in society (Azizy, 2002).

Based on the results of interviews conducted in Dunggala Village, Tapa District, the local community said that:

*The distribution of inheritance in our area still uses a deliberation or customary law approach and it has been carried out from generation to generation. The distribution is carried out with a family spirit with negotiation and an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for every decision that has been made. If the distribution is carried out according to customary law, then each heir has the same share according to the agreement, then the decision is accepted by each heir sincerely and with full respect for the heir. Although in reality, in the current development of society, there are many contradictions in the distribution that is carried out evenly, especially by male heirs. Some are of the view that it should be carried out with an Islamic law approach as the Gorontalo customary principle which is based on sharia that male heirs get twice as much as female heirs (Sadiki, interview 21 Agustus, 2024).*

The above view is in line with several cases of inheritance disputes that occurred in Dunggala Village, where the causal factor was because they felt the distribution was unfair and the distribution was uneven. The unfair and uneven distribution was mostly felt by female heirs. Based on existing data, the most disputes occurred when the inheritance object was land/plantations, rice fields, houses and livestock. One of the reasons for the Fairness of the 2/1 division was because the burden on sons was greater and sons were obliged to give their property to their families (Ruslan, 2023).

If referring to the provisions of Islamic law, inheritance distribution is regulated in a structured, systematic, and full of justice values. In it, the ownership rights for each individual, both men and women, are determined in accordance with valid legal provisions. Sharia also stipulates the ownership rights of a person after he dies, which must be distributed to all his relatives and family. Both adults and children, all have legal rights to inheritance (Manan, 2008).

The distribution of inheritance in Gorontalo society is influenced by local customs combined with Islamic teachings. The main principle used in the distribution of inheritance is justice based on family values and Islamic law. There are at least 4 (four) general descriptions of the distribution of inheritance in Gorontalo society: First, based on Islamic law, the distribution of inheritance follows the law of faraid as taught in the Qur'an and hadith. The rights of heirs are regulated according to the provisions of sharia, such as the difference in shares between men and women, where boys receive twice as much as girls. Second, the role of custom in settlement, Gorontalo customs serve to maintain harmony in the family. If the division according to Islamic law has the potential to cause conflict, the community usually uses a customary approach that emphasizes deliberation and consensus. This custom helps in resolving special cases that are not directly accommodated in Islamic law. Third, distribution based on deliberation, in some cases heirs may deliberate to divide the property equally or according to individual needs, such as giving priority to family members who are more in need. This approach is often considered to reflect Gorontalo traditional values that emphasize togetherness and family harmony. Fourth, conflict resolution, in the event of a dispute over the distribution of inheritance, traditional or religious figures are often involved as mediators. They direct the resolution based on a combination of sharia teachings and local customary values.

The combination of Islamic sharia law and Gorontalo customs reflects the flexibility of society in managing inheritance, so that religious values are maintained while maintaining harmony within the family. In relation to gender equality, also known as gender justice, it refers to the view that every individual should be treated equally without discrimination based on gender. This is based on the understanding that gender is a natural aspect that comes from God. In the context of Islamic inheritance law, the provision that boys receive twice as much inheritance as girls cannot be considered a form of injustice or discrimination against women. This difference arises because men bear greater responsibilities in family and community life.

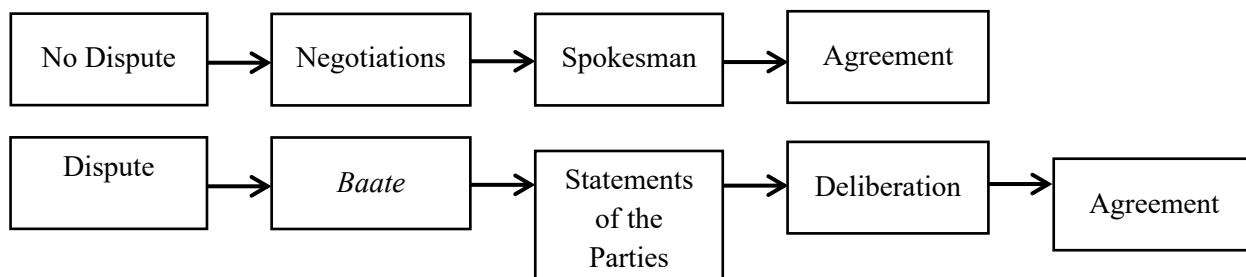
**Review of inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society**

The principles of Gorontalo Customary Law were agreed upon by King Eyato after Islam entered the Gorontalo region in 1525, which then gave birth to a second source for the customs, culture, and history of the Gorontalo region. The first source sees its natural environment as Sunnatullah, while the second source is the teachings of Islam through the Book of Allah. The combination of these two sources has led to developments and changes in the culture and history of the Gorontalo people.

The concept of gender is a concept used to identify differences between men and women in terms of socio-cultural or non-biological aspects (Fujiati, 2014). The social structure in Gorontalo generally adheres to a “patrilineal” lineage. However, this does not mean that the role of women is considered lower than that of men. While family discord often begins with a disproportionate distribution of inheritance. Referring to the results of this study, the form of inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society, until now varies. In some cases, the distribution is carried out evenly between male and female heirs. This is influenced by Gorontalo customary law, which does not differentiate inheritance rights based on gender, so that men and women have the same rights in receiving inheritance.

The division of inheritance is basically carried out with a family spirit through deliberation and mutual respect. If the division is carried out according to the provisions where each heir gets an equal share based on the current inheritance law, the decision is accepted by the heirs sincerely and with full respect for the heir.

The long-standing practice of inheritance in the Gorontalo community is carried out by submitting it to the customary leader (*Baate*). This submission takes two forms, namely: *first*, the case of inheritance distribution is submitted without any prior dispute between the parties or heirs concerned. *Second*, the settlement of the inheritance distribution case by the Customary Leader (*Baate*) after a dispute occurs between the heirs concerned. These two types of cases have different settlement procedures, because each has unique characteristics and characteristics in the settlement process as in the chart below:



For distribution that is not preceded by a dispute, during the deliberation, someone is usually appointed who has authority and is considered competent to help resolve the problems faced by the heirs. Meanwhile, for cases that are preceded by a dispute, the baate becomes the judge and there are statements from the parties, which are then carried out by deliberation and decisions are made based on agreement.

The time for the implementation of the settlement of inheritance distribution cases is carried out by the Customary Head (*Baate*), namely after a seven-day ceremony known as "*Pituhui*" or after forty days, one hundred days after the testator dies. The implementation is carried out at the "*bandayo pobaide*" place (a place for joint deliberation), then presenting witnesses as community leaders who are called the three customary groups or three customary veins. *First*, "*buatula bubato*" in the government sector consisting of the Customary Head (*baate*), Village Head (*taudaa*). *Second*, "*buatula saraa*" in the religious sector consisting of the Imam (*imam daa*), *mufti* (who confirms), "*khadi*" (holder of religious law). *Third*, "*buatula balla*" in the security sector consisting of "*mayulu*" (security).

**View of gender equality on the method of inheritance distribution in Gorontalo society.**

While the principle of justice remains, there needs to be a renewal in the interpretation and application of Islamic law to reflect social and economic developments and advocate for gender equality. This adaptation is not an attempt to oppose culture or religion, but a step towards a more just society for all individuals, regardless of gender (Ruslie et al., 2024).

Ismail Puhi said that the customary inheritance law that is alive and in force in today's society is no longer the customary inheritance law that is in accordance with the customary philosophy of *hula-hula'a to syara'a, syara'a hula-hula'a to Kitabi*. This can be seen in the deviations in inheritance practices in society, such as: the practice of delaying the distribution of inheritance; the idea that inheritance will only be divided if there is a dispute; delaying the distribution of inheritance is done to respect one of the parents who is still alive; giving a will to a daughter; determining the amount of the portion for each heir equally; giving a portion to adopted children; distribution of inheritance is done before the death of the testator; and there are also some people who do not divide inheritance at all. Ismail Puhi said that inheritance practices like this are not in line with the customary philosophy of *hula-hula'a to syara'a, syara'a hula-hula'a to Kitabi*. (Pongoliu et al., 2018).

Taufik H. Ngadi said, in the Muslim community in Gorontalo there are three types of inheritance law systems that exist, namely: (1) Islamic inheritance law; (2) customary inheritance law that has been colored by Islamic legal values; and (3) inheritance law collaboration with customary law version of the Dutch colonialists. If the settlement of inheritance division is carried out through deliberation at the family level, then most of the community uses two customary inheritance law systems, namely customary law that has been colored by Islamic legal values, and/or customary law created by the Dutch colonialists. If the division is carried out in the Religious Court, then the legal system used is the Islamic inheritance law system. (Pongoliu et al., 2018)

Both statements show the complexity of inheritance law practices in Gorontalo, where the influences of custom, Islam, and colonialism overlap. Ismail Puhi highlights the inconsistency of inheritance practices with indigenous customary philosophy, while Taufik H. Ngadi identifies three inheritance systems used depending on the context, with Islamic law dominant in the formal court system.

There are still many views on determining the size of the portion for each heir equally (between men and women) which are considered inconsistent with the customary philosophy of *hula-hula'a to syara'a, syara'a hula-hula'a to the Book* and are even said to be contrary to Islamic law, which is something that can still be debated. Because the division of inheritance through deliberation is seen as a good decision to avoid disputes between heirs and is permitted in Islam. Moreover, the principle of inheritance distribution in Islam aims to achieve justice and no one feels disadvantaged in the inheritance distribution system used by the local community.

The idea of gender equality encourages a change in mindset towards a more just and balanced society, where every individual, regardless of gender, has equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities. This concept, which continues to evolve, aims to eliminate stereotypes and social norms that have been deeply rooted, by creating an inclusive and equal society. Gender equality, as a core principle, demands equal participation and representation between men and women in various aspects of life, including economic, political, social and cultural fields. This approach is based on the belief that every individual has value and abilities that must be respected regardless of gender, and equal access to resources, education and opportunities is the basis of a developed society. Through this approach, it is hoped that a more just and harmonious social order will be created, recognizing at the same time the important role of men and women in bringing positive change to their communities and the world as a whole.

If viewed from an economic perspective, women have an important role in supporting the financial needs of the family. Women's economic contribution, both as breadwinners in the formal and informal sectors, can have a significant impact. Fair and equal inheritance distribution for women plays

an important role in supporting the overall financial well-being of the family. From a cultural perspective, women have a key role in maintaining and preserving the cultural values of society. As an integral part of the community, women hold a great influence in maintaining the sustainability of culture. Fair and equal distribution of inheritance for women can encourage the preservation and development of various aspects of culture.

In the author's opinion, the emphasis on deliberation as a means of distributing inheritance reflects a pragmatic approach to achieving social harmony. By prioritizing consensus and mutual agreement, communities can overcome potential conflicts and reach solutions that are perceived as fair to all parties involved. This approach is in line with the broader goal of promoting equality and cohesion, even in contexts where formal legal frameworks may be inadequate. In conclusion, the complexity of inheritance law practices in Gorontalo reveals the challenges and opportunities inherent in balancing customary traditions, Islamic principles, and modern notions of gender equality. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between cultural values, religious teachings, and societal progress. Through deliberation and a commitment to justice, Gorontalo inheritance practices can evolve to reflect the aspirations of a more inclusive and just society.

### **The concept of developing gender equality in the inheritance distribution system of Gorontalo society.**

#### **1. Conflict Management**

In the context of Islamic teachings, the term gender is indeed a sensitive topic. However, disseminating understanding about it is still needed so that society becomes more aware of women's rights and the issue of gender equality in Islam (Alfitri, 2020). Disputes arise due to perceived inequities in the distribution of inheritance between sons and daughters. Inheritance practices among the Muslim community in Gorontalo today are influenced by a diverse range of legal systems. Addressing conflicts in inheritance distribution requires effective conflict management to ensure mutual understanding between the property owner and the heirs. This includes recognizing the rationale and intentions behind unequal or equal allocation of assets.

Conflict management plays a vital role in proactively mitigating and preventing disputes from escalating into larger, more widespread issues. By implementing effective conflict resolution strategies, individuals, organizations, and communities can address existing disagreements and establish preventive measures to reduce the likelihood of future conflicts (Assaad et al., 2023). This proactive approach fosters lasting stability, harmony, and coexistence, ultimately contributing to the resilience and well-being of all parties involved and the broader community.

Since conflicts are inevitable, managers should adopt an approach that leverages conflicts constructively based on Islamic principles, allowing them to contribute positively and productively to the organization's development and dynamics in the future.(Ghufroon, 2021) Managing conflicts in inheritance distribution among the Muslim community in Gorontalo, particularly from a gender equality perspective, requires a multi-dimensional approach that balances religious principles, customary practices, and modern notions of equity. This process involves addressing cultural sensitivities, legal frameworks, and social dynamics to foster justice and harmony.

- a. Promoting inclusive deliberation, the principle of *musyawarah* (deliberation) holds a significant place in both Islamic teachings and Gorontalo's customary practices. Encouraging family discussions that include all stakeholders men and women alike ensures that each heir's voice is heard and their concerns addressed. Inheritance decisions made collectively can help reduce misunderstandings, promote fairness, and prevent disputes. To facilitate such discussions: First, a neutral mediator, such as a religious leader, community elder, or legal

- expert, can guide the deliberation process. Second, grounding the discussion in Islamic values of justice (*adl*) and compassion can provide a shared ethical framework. Third, women's participation should be actively encouraged to ensure their perspectives are included and respected.
- b. Strengthening awareness of gender equality in Islamic contexts, many conflicts arise from differing interpretations of Islamic inheritance laws and their application. Education plays a critical role in addressing these discrepancies: First, providing community education about Islamic principles of justice, which allow for negotiated solutions, can help reconcile religious beliefs with the need for fairness. Second, highlighting examples from Islamic history where women's rights were upheld can challenge traditional stereotypes and inspire progressive interpretations. Third, working with religious scholars to offer gender-sensitive interpretations of inheritance laws ensures theological legitimacy while promoting equality.
  - c. Integrating customary and religious laws, in Gorontalo the interplay between customary law (*adat*) and Islamic law creates unique challenges. Efforts to harmonize these systems can help manage conflicts: First, customary practices, such as *hula-hula'a to syara'a*, emphasize aligning *adat* with Islamic principles. Encouraging this alignment can create a more cohesive legal framework. Second, adaptations in customary practices that uphold gender equality while respecting religious values can address historical inequities.
  - d. Formal legal frameworks and alternative dispute resolution, the legal system in Gorontalo often relies on formal Islamic inheritance laws, which may not always align with gender equality principles. To address this: First, alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, such as family mediation or arbitration, can provide a more flexible approach to resolving inheritance disputes. Second, local government and community organizations can offer legal aid services to ensure that women are aware of their rights and have access to fair representation.
  - e. Empowering women economically and culturally, empowering women can play a vital role in reducing inheritance-related conflicts: First, financial independence can decrease women's reliance on inheritance as their sole source of security, mitigating tensions over distribution. Second, encouraging women to take leadership roles within cultural and religious institutions can strengthen their influence and ensure gender-sensitive practices.
  - f. Fostering community dialogues and advocacy, community dialogues that involve all members of society, including religious leaders, community elders, and activists, can create a platform for discussing and resolving inheritance conflicts: First, open discussions about gender equality and inheritance practices can challenge deeply rooted stereotypes and cultural biases. Second, advocacy groups can work to raise awareness and promote legal reforms that reflect both gender equality and cultural sensitivity
2. Conflict Transformation, in general, there are two main methods used to resolve inheritance disputes: through family mediation or local government involvement, or through formal court proceedings (Tarmizi et al., 2024). Conflict transformation, a multifaceted process, is essential in this context as it requires integrating gender justice principles to address and reform the underlying socio-cultural structures that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Moreover, it involves fostering sustainable and amicable relationships among the parties involved, ultimately leading to a robust conflict resolution process rooted in empowerment, justice, peace, and mutual recognition as fundamental pillars of social cohesion and harmonious coexistence. This holistic approach highlights the importance of structural transformation to eliminate gender-based sources of conflict and nurture enduring, equitable relationships that actively contribute to conflict prevention and social stability.



Conflict transformation offers a constructive and systemic approach to resolving disputes over inheritance distribution in the Muslim community of Gorontalo, particularly when viewed through the lens of gender equality. Unlike conflict management or resolution, which primarily aim to address immediate disputes, conflict transformation seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict, fostering social change and promoting justice in the long term.

In the context of inheritance disputes, conflict transformation involves reshaping societal attitudes, norms, and practices to create a more equitable framework that respects both religious principles and the evolving concept of gender equality.

- a. Recognizing root causes, inheritance disputes in Gorontalo often stem from a combination of cultural, legal, and religious factors. Customary practices, differing interpretations of Islamic law, and patriarchal norms contribute to inequalities in inheritance distribution. Conflict transformation begins by identifying these root causes and fostering dialogue to unpack the historical and social factors perpetuating the inequities.
- b. Creating inclusive spaces for dialogue, a critical step in conflict transformation is establishing safe and inclusive platforms where all stakeholders male and female heirs, community leaders, religious scholars, and legal experts can engage in open and respectful discussions. These dialogues should aim to: First, build mutual understanding of the cultural and religious rationale behind inheritance practices. Second, explore how these practices intersect with contemporary ideals of gender equality. Third, develop a shared vision for equitable inheritance distribution that reflects the community's values and aspirations.
- c. Fostering gender-sensitive interpretations of Islamic law, Islamic inheritance law often becomes a point of contention in these disputes. While the Quran outlines specific portions for male and female heirs, it also emphasizes justice and compassion. Conflict transformation involves working with religious scholars to promote interpretations of Islamic law that: First, uphold gender equity while remaining true to Islamic principles. Second, encourage negotiated settlements, such as *musyawarah* (deliberation), as a legitimate and preferred means of resolving disputes. Second, highlight the flexibility within Islamic jurisprudence to adapt to local contexts and changing societal needs.
- d. Bridging customary and religious practices, customary law (*adat*) plays a significant role in Gorontalo's inheritance practices. Conflict transformation requires efforts to harmonize *adat* with Islamic law and gender equality principles. This may involve: First, reevaluating and modernizing customary norms that disadvantage women. Second integrating culturally resonant practices that promote fairness and inclusivity. Third, educating the community about the importance of aligning customary practices with broader principles of justice.
- e. Empowering women through capacity building, conflict transformation emphasizes the empowerment of marginalized groups. In the context of inheritance disputes, this involves: First, providing women with legal literacy and knowledge about their inheritance rights under Islamic law and local customs. Second, strengthening women's economic independence to reduce reliance on inheritance as their sole means of security. Third, encouraging women's active participation in family and community decision-making processes related to inheritance.
- f. Building a culture of justice and equity, long-term transformation requires cultivating a societal mindset that values justice, equity, and gender inclusivity. This involves: First, Incorporating lessons on gender equality and Islamic justice into educational curricula. Second, promoting public awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and cultural norms that perpetuate discrimination. Third, celebrating positive examples of equitable inheritance practices within the community to inspire change.

Conflict transformation in the inheritance practices of Gorontalo's Muslim community is a holistic and dynamic process that addresses both the immediate disputes and the systemic inequalities underlying them. By fostering dialogue, bridging cultural and religious frameworks, and empowering marginalized voices, this approach can create a sustainable and just system of

inheritance distribution. It not only resolves conflicts but also paves the way for a more equitable and harmonious society where gender equality and religious values coexist

### **Conclusion**

The discussion highlights the intricate interplay between Islamic law, Gorontalo customs, and gender equality in inheritance distribution. While Gorontalo society adheres to Islamic principles, it integrates customary practices to maintain familial harmony, emphasizing deliberation and consensus. However, deviations from both Islamic teachings and traditional customs have emerged, reflecting the influence of colonial inheritance systems and evolving societal norms. Efforts to reconcile these differences involve fostering dialogue, harmonizing cultural and religious practices, empowering women, and promoting justice. By addressing underlying inequities and adapting to modern gender equality ideals, Gorontalo society can achieve a balance between tradition, religion, and progress, fostering a fair and harmonious inheritance system.

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