

# ***CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS: EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING FAMILIES***

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the achievement of gender equality in working families by considering Islamic views and the influence of social and cultural norms. Using a Construction-Normative Analysis approach it is used to critically review existing norms and encourage a more contextual understanding of gender equality, with the aim of promoting the principles of equality and justice in working families. The research also highlights the importance of understanding the historical context and intent of Prophet Muhammad's teachings to avoid establishing discriminatory laws against women. This study used qualitative methodology to analyze the issue of gender equality among family members who take part in the workforce. This study includes an in-depth literature analysis on Social-Normative Construction, focusing on the values of equality and justice in the working family environment. Data in this study was collected from various articles and books relevant to the topics discussed. The results of this study emphasize the need for critical assessment of existing norms to promote equality and justice and call for contextual understanding of religious texts to support gender equality. Taking into account the essence of Islamic teachings that emphasize universal equality regardless of gender, national origin, ethnicity, ethnicity, or family background, this study invites to see every individual standing on an equal footing.

**Keywords:** gender, working family, social construction, normative

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pencapaian kesetaraan gender dalam keluarga yang bekerja dengan mempertimbangkan pandangan Islam dan pengaruh norma sosial dan budaya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan Analisis Konstruksi-Normatif digunakan untuk meninjau kritis norma-norma yang ada dan mendorong pemahaman yang lebih kontekstual tentang kesetaraan gender, dengan tujuan mempromosikan prinsip-prinsip kesetaraan dan keadilan dalam keluarga pekerja. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti pentingnya memahami konteks historis dan maksud dari ajaran Nabi Muhammad SAW untuk menghindari pembentukan hukum yang diskriminatif terhadap perempuan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi kualitatif untuk menganalisa isu kesetaraan gender di antara anggota keluarga yang mengambil bagian dalam angkatan kerja. Penelitian ini mencakup analisis literatur yang

mendalam mengenai Konstruksi Sosial-Normatif, dengan fokus pada nilai-nilai kesetaraan dan keadilan di lingkungan keluarga yang bekerja. Data dalam studi ini dikumpulkan dari berbagai artikel dan buku yang relevan dengan topik yang dibahas. Hasil penelitian ini menekankan perlunya penilaian kritis terhadap norma yang ada untuk mendorong kesetaraan dan keadilan serta meminta pemahaman kontekstual teks-teks agama untuk mendukung kesetaraan gender. Dengan mempertimbangkan esensi ajaran Islam yang menekankan kesetaraan universal tanpa memandang jenis kelamin, asal negara, etnis, suku, atau latar belakang keluarga, penelitian ini mengajak untuk melihat setiap individu berdiri pada pijakan yang sama.

**Kata Kunci:** Gender, Keluarga Pekerja, Konstruksi Sosial, Normatif

## INTRODUCTION

Discussions about gender equality are now a topic that is often debated, with various opinions for and against.<sup>1</sup> Some people mistakenly view gender equality as women's rejection of inferior positions, when the goal is to create more equal relationships between men and women. In accordance with divine provisions, men and women were created with different but complementary roles, where in interpersonal relationships, women and men become each other's life companions.<sup>2</sup>

In Islamic teachings, marriage is expected to create a family unit that functions as an independent system. Apart from that, families are required to create a social structure that plays an important role in communicating and internalizing the values of equality through activities daily.<sup>3</sup> In this modern era, families face increasingly complex challenges, with rapid social changes and often shifting the dynamics of traditional roles in the family. These changes can cause anxiety and have a significant impact on the roles played by each family member, especially husband and wife, which ultimately affects the dynamics of their relationship in married life.<sup>4</sup>

The ideal family is an environment that provides security, peace and comfort for all its members. However, reality often shows that there is inequality in the division of tasks and gender roles between husband and wife, which often

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<sup>1</sup> Fardan Mahmudatul Imamah, "Dinamika Feminisme Islam Dalam Mendefinisikan Perempuan: Tinjauan Filosofis," *Martabat: Jurnal Perempuan Dan Anak* 6 (2022): 167–98.

<sup>2</sup> Loeziana Uce, "Keseimbangan Peran Gender Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Takammul: Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Islam Serta Perlindungan Anak* 9, no. 1 (2020): 34–52.

<sup>3</sup> Afthon Yazid, "The Role of Each Family Support for Living Cost Balance: A Structural-Functional-Normative Analysis Approach," *Syakhshiyah Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 3, no. 2 (2023): 239–54.

<sup>4</sup> Frances Goldscheider, Eva Bernhardt, and Trude Lappegård, "The Gender Revolution: A Framework for Understanding Changing Family and Demographic Behavior," *Population and Development Review* 41, no. 2 (2015): 207–39.

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## CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS: EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING FAMILIES

results in double responsibilities for women. These problems often arise from the social and cultural structures prevailing in society, which are not rooted in the principle of gender equality.<sup>5</sup> There is a misperception regarding dominant and subordinate roles, as well as an unequal division of roles between male (father, son) and female (mother, daughter) family members, where men tend to be given special privileges and women are placed as class citizens. two. Although in certain circles, such as middle class and educated people, relations between men and women may appear more equal, in general, the balance of gender relations in many groups of society is still not as expected.<sup>6</sup>

The issue of career in the context of families with two incomes is a relatively new topic and is closely related to individual traits and the dynamics of relationships between couples.<sup>7</sup> One of the challenges often faced by families with two careers is the existence of gender views that have been embedded in society, especially those related to gender-based job stereotypes and assignment based on gender.<sup>8</sup> The formation of an idea that classifies the employment or career sector based on gender, formerly known as "gender", has triggered a separation between the household sphere and the community sphere.<sup>9</sup>

This research aims to explore normative concepts that apply in the family sphere where both partners have careers, with the main aim of promoting gender equality. This study will explore the social and cultural norms that play a role in determining the distribution of roles and obligations between couples, as well as understand the influence of these normative concepts on gender balance in family life. By gaining a broader understanding of the norms that influence the perceptions and behavior of working family members, it is hoped that this research can contribute useful perspectives and practical solutions to advance

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<sup>5</sup> Livia Sz Oláh, Daniele Vignoli, and Irena E Kotowska, "Gender Roles and Families," *Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics*, 2020, 1–28.

<sup>6</sup> Ina Salmah Febriani, "Keseimbangan Karakter Feminin Dan Maskulin Dalam Mewujudkan Masyarakat Madani," *Tsaqofah* 19, no. 1 (2021): 45–62.

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer E Swanberg et al., "A Narrative Review: Understanding How Employment Context Influences the Occupational Health and Well-Being of Older Workers in Low-Wage Jobs," *Current and Emerging Trends in Aging and Work*, 2020, 297–317.

<sup>8</sup> Athon Yazid, Suud Sarim Karimullah, and Arif Sugitanata, "Comparative Study On Childfree Marriage In Some Selected Countries," *Jurnal Al-Hakim: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa, Studi Syariah, Hukum Dan Filantropi*, 2023, 267–84; Donna Bridges et al., "Negotiating Gender in the Male-Dominated Skilled Trades: A Systematic Literature Review," *Construction Management and Economics* 38, no. 10 (2020): 894–916.

<sup>9</sup> Nur Ridwan, "Standar Ganda Perempuan Dalam Ruang Publik," *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 2, no. 2 (2023): 184–92.

more effective and inclusive steps in achieving gender equality among same-sex couples. -sama has a career.

## DISCUSSION

### Gender Equality in an Islamic Perspective

The essence of Islamic teachings emphasizes universal equality among all individuals, regardless of gender, national origin, ethnicity, tribe, or family background, with everyone standing on the same footing.<sup>10</sup> In Islam, the factor that really differentiates and determines a person's dignity is their level of piety and servitude to God. This explanation is found in Al-Qur'an Surat al-Hujarat verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ.

*"O all mankind, indeed We have created you (consisting of) male and female and We have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another, indeed the noblest among you is the most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and all-seeing".*

Before the arrival of Islam, women were a part of society that rarely experienced freedom, bound by dominant social structures and subordinated to men in their social environment. Therefore, women really hope for the success of the mission brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who brought teachings based on human values that apply universally.<sup>11</sup> The arrival of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the essence of which was liberation from all forms of oppression, was one of the main factors that supported the success of his mission. And so, a revelation carrying a message of honor and universality resounded in the midst of the Arabian desert, providing refreshing and glorious news for all humanity.<sup>12</sup>

The Qur'an's recognition of equality does not imply absolute equality between men and women in all aspects. To maintain natural balance (fell asleep), essential differences must exist, where each gender has its unique role and function. Without this difference, the world and the universe might experience destruction. Therefore, as wisdom from Allah in creating two different types of

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<sup>10</sup> Saeeda Shah, "Gender Equality and Situated Constructions: Perspectives of Women Educational Leaders in a Muslim Society," *Educational Studies* 56, no. 1 (2020): 37–53.

<sup>11</sup> Amelia Husna, Wilaela Wilaela, and Syamruddin Nst, "Hak Dan Kedudukan Perempuan Dalam Perjalanan Sejarah Sebelum Dan Setelah Datangnya Islam," *Madinatul Iman* 1, no. 2 (2022): 85–106.

<sup>12</sup> Jenny Walker, *The Arabian Desert in English Travel Writing Since 1950: A Barren Legacy?* (Taylor & Francis, 2022).

## CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS: EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING FAMILIES

humans, the differences do not only lie in physical form and gender, but also in emotional aspects and chemical composition of their bodies.<sup>13</sup>

Some views consider differences in treatment of the genders to be justified, arguing that women have more weaknesses and shortcomings than men. These beliefs are often based on a literal interpretation of the hadith, which is considered the second source of Islamic teachings after the Koran. However, this view is generally held by those who do not consider the socio-cultural context, historical background, and other factors that influence the transmission of hadith. As in the following hadith<sup>14</sup>:

حَدَّثَنَا عُثْمَانُ بْنُ الْهَيْثَمِ، حَدَّثَنَا عَوْفٌ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ، عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ، قَالَ: لَقَدْ تَفَعَّيْتُ اللَّهَ بِكَلِمَةٍ سَمِعْتُهَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيَّامَ الْجَمَلِ، بَعْدَ مَا كِدْتُ أَنْ أَلْحَقَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْجَمَلِ فَأُقَاتِلَ مَعَهُمْ، قَالَ: لَمَّا بَلَغَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّ أَهْلَ فَارِسَ، قَدْ مَلَكُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِنْتُ كِسْرَى، قَالَ: «لَنْ يُفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ».

*Uṣman bin Haisam conveyed to us from Auf from al-Hasan that Abu Bakrah said: indeed, Allah made the sentence that I once heard from the Messenger of Allah, be useful for me during the Jamat war, at that time I almost joined the army of camel riders and fight with them. Abu Bakrah said: When news reached the Messenger of Allah that the Persians were led by a princess Kisra, he said, "A people led by a woman will not be lucky."*

In this hadith text, a contextual understanding of this very important hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is needed, namely one that involves interpreting the hadith based on the events and conditions when the hadith was expressed, as well as the recipient of the hadith message. This means that the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW must be understood not only from the text literally but also from its context. Although it appears that historical context is a key element in a contextual approach, the editorial aspect should not be ignored either. This aspect is equally important in determining and understanding the deeper meaning (philosophical meaning) so that the hadith can be communicated effectively.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Nurmalia Nurmalia, "Konsep Pendidikan Multikultural Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Studi Pada QS. Al-Hujurat Ayat 9-13)," *JM2PI: Jurnal Media Karya Mahasiswa Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2020): 209–34.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari* (Lebanon: Dar Touq Al-Najat, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Ramli Abdul Wahid, "Perkembangan Metode Pemahaman Hadis Di Indonesia," *Journal Analytica Islamica* 4, no. 2 (2015): 231–43.

Prioritizing understanding of hadith texts alone is not enough to obtain a comprehensive understanding. Therefore, it is important to consider the context in which the hadith was uttered, so that the meaning of the hadith can be understood thoroughly, both in terms of the text and the context. In this context, it is also important to examine other hadiths that are relevant as arguments in discussions about gender equality, to ensure whether these arguments are appropriate as arguments. Another proposition that promotes gender equality is, for example, the hadith narrated by Bukhari<sup>16</sup>:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «اسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ خُلِقَتْ مِنْ ضِلْعٍ، وَإِنَّ أَعْوَجَ شَيْءٍ فِي الضِّلْعِ أَعْلَاهُ، فَإِنْ ذَهَبَتْ تُقِيمُهُ كَسَرْتَهُ، وَإِنْ تَرَكَتَهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ أَعْوَجَ، فَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ.»

*Abu Hurairah said, the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, said, bequeath (give advice) goodness to women! Because, he was created from bent ribs. In fact, the most bent rib is the top one, if you straighten it too hard then the rib will break. If you don't straighten it, then it will always be crooked. For that, bequeath goodness to women.*

By understanding the above hadith, meanings of Islamic teachings that are not in accordance with the values of justice and human rights, including views that undermine gender equality by some scholars or society, are meanings that require critical review. Mistakes in interpreting the verses of the Koran and Hadith can result in laws that are discriminatory against women. Patriarchal and misogynistic attitudes often arise from authoritarian practices in the interpretation of religious texts, which are often carried out by puritan groups who ignore other perspectives.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the need for a contextual approach to hadith must involve several important aspects: first, understanding the historical context (*asbāb al-wurūd*) behind the hadith; second, identifying the *illat* or reasons underlying the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, taking into account the principles of benefit and benefit; third, paying attention to the various roles that Rasulullah SAW played in his life, including as prophet, messenger, father, husband, friend, military leader, etc.

### Construction Theory

Social construction theory is a framework of thought that proposes that social reality is formed through a process of interaction between individuals and

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<sup>16</sup> *Sahih Al-Bukhari*.

<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Iqbal Juliansyahzen, "Otoritarianisme Pemahaman Keagamaan: Melacak Akar Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Dalam Rumah Tangga," *Yinyang: Jurnal Studi Islam Gender Dan Anak*, 2021, 49–70.

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## CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS: EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING FAMILIES

society. This theory was developed by Peter L. Berger<sup>18</sup> and Thomas Luckmann, who emphasized that social knowledge is the result of a dynamic and continuous process.<sup>19</sup> According to the constructivist paradigm, social reality is not given a priori, but is built by individuals who have the freedom to act and respond to various stimuli in their social environment. This means that humans not only passively accept existing social conditions, but are also active in creating and modifying social reality through their interactions.

Berger and Luckmann suggest that social construction occurs through three main processes: externalization, in which individuals express their experiences and knowledge; objectivation, which turns these expressions into part of a mutually recognized social reality; and internalization, where individuals absorb and make parts of social reality into personal knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

In the context of mass media, social construction theory has been expanded to understand how the media plays a role in shaping the public's understanding of reality. This process involves stages such as preparation of construction materials, deployment of construction, establishment of construction, and confirmation of construction, all of which contribute to the formation of a social reality influenced by media. Constructivism itself has several variants, including hypothetical realism which views knowledge as a hypothesis that approaches reality, and constructivism which understands knowledge as a representation of reality itself.<sup>21</sup>

In all these variants, knowledge is considered to be the result of interactions between individuals and their environments, which are continuously shaped and rebuilt through dynamic social processes. Knowledge is not only a reflection of objective reality, but also a construct shaped by individual experiences and perceptions. Thus, the social reality that we

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<sup>18</sup> Ahmad Arif Masdar Hilmy and Ria Cahyaning Utami, "Classification of Women in The Class Concept of Dowry: A Study of Berger and Luckmann's Social Construction," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 1 (2021): 137–60.

<sup>19</sup> Miloš Jovanović, "Bourdieu's Theory and the Social Constructivism of Berger and Luckmann," *Filozofija i Društvo* 32, no. 4 (2021): 518–37.

<sup>20</sup> Mohammed Abdel Karim Al Hourani, "Covid-19 and the Social Construction of Reality in Jordan: Taking Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann to the Realm of Social Power," *Comparative Sociology* 20, no. 6 (2021): 718–40.

<sup>21</sup> Achmad Suhendra Hadiwijaya, "Sintesa Teori Konstruksi Sosial Realitas Dan Konstruksi Sosial Media Massa," *DLALEKTIKA KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi Dan Pembangunan Daerah* 11, no. 1 (2023): 75–89.

experience is the product of mutual agreement and meaning that continues to develop in society.<sup>22</sup>

Indirectly, it can be understood that construction theory is a theoretical methodology that examines how social concepts, realities and values are formed through social dynamics and exchange between people. This approach underlines that social reality is not something inherent, but is created through a process of interpretation and collective formation by members of society. The Construction Analysis approach assumes that the meaning and understanding of concepts or events is dynamic and subjective, depending on the context and interpretations given by society. In this process of formation, interaction between individuals, dialogue, and the application of language play an important role in creating and establishing collective reality. The basic principle of this analysis is that social reality is closely tied to language and meaning constructed by individuals and groups within a community.<sup>23</sup>

In special situations, the Construction Analysis Approach can be applied to explore the ways in which specific issues, phenomena, or ideas are formed and interpreted by people or groups in a community. For example, in the context of gender equality, this method can reveal how views about gender roles, social norms related to gender, and ideas about gender equality are created and interpreted by society. The Construction Analysis approach allows us to understand that social concepts are not static, but can develop and adapt depending on time and different social environments. Therefore, this method offers a deeper understanding of how social reality is flexible and shaped by contextual factors.

### **Gender Equality in Working Families in Constructive-Normative Analysis Theory**

The view of gender equality in the working family in the perspective of construction-normative theory emphasizes the understanding that social and cultural norms exist in society.<sup>24</sup> And this is closely related to the distribution of roles and obligations between couples, can and should be reviewed to promote gender balance in family life. Social construction theory, developed by Berger

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<sup>22</sup> Gladi Dwinta Kusuma, Prayudi Prayudi, and Christina Rochayanti, "Konstruksi Realita Sosial City Branding Magelang Kota Sejuta Bunga (MKSB)," *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 17, no. 3 (2020): 314–27.

<sup>23</sup> Gerrit Van der Waldt, "Constructing Conceptual Frameworks in Social Science Research," *TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 16, no. 1 (2020): 1–9.

<sup>24</sup> Irma Nur Rahmy and Yudi Hamsah, "Normative Construction of Obligations to Balance the Parenting Roles By Working Partners in Gender Equality Perspective," *An-Nisa': Journal of Gender Studies* 16, no. 2 (2023): 153–70.

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## CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS: EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING FAMILIES

and Luckmann, states that social reality, including views on gender equality, is shaped through a process of interaction between individuals and society.<sup>25</sup>

In the context of working families, where both partners have careers, there are particular challenges arising from gendered occupational stereotypes and the allocation of tasks based on sex that have long been embedded in society. A normative-construction analysis approach allows us to explore and understand how these normative concepts influence the perceptions and behavior of working family members, as well as how they can be changed to achieve more effective and inclusive gender equality.<sup>26</sup> In Islam, gender equality is based on the universal principle of equality among all individuals, where a person's dignity is determined by their level of piety and servitude to God, not by their gender. Therefore, in Muslim working families, it is important to internalize the values of equality through daily activities and create social structures that support this equality.<sup>27</sup>

Overall, the normative-construction theory perspective calls for a critical review of existing norms and encourages a more contextual and dynamic approach in understanding how the social construction of gender and the roles associated with it can change and be adapted to reflect principles of equality and justice. This approach recognizes that the interpretation of social and religious norms is not static, but can evolve along with changes in society and culture. Thus, normative-construction analysis not only highlights the importance of considering historical and socio-cultural contexts in understanding religious texts and hadiths, but also emphasizes the need to adapt and reinterpret these norms to ensure that they support gender equality and do not reinforce discrimination or injustice.

### CONCLUSION

In the context of working families, gender equality must be understood and realized by considering the different but complementary roles of men and women, as emphasized in Islamic teachings. This research shows the importance of understanding normative concepts contextually and dynamically, considering that the social construction of gender can develop and adapt along with changes in time and the social environment. A Normative-Constructive

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<sup>25</sup> Hubert Knoblauch and René Wilke, "The Common Denominator: The Reception and Impact of Berger and Luckmann's The Social Construction of Reality," *Human Studies* 39 (2016): 51–69.

<sup>26</sup> Tat Chor Au-Yeung, "The Normative Construction of and Contestation over In-Work Benefits in Hong Kong: A Moral Economy Approach," *Social Policy and Society* 22, no. 2 (2023): 209–25.

<sup>27</sup> Salma Nawaz et al., "The Role of Human Rights and Obligations toward Cross Gender Empowerment under the Domain of Islamic Laws," *iRASD Journal of Management* 3, no. 3 (2021): 208–17.

Analysis approach is used to critically review existing norms and encourage a more contextual understanding of gender equality, with the aim of promoting the principles of equality and justice in working families. This research also emphasizes the importance of understanding hadith and religious teachings contextually to avoid interpretations that could undermine gender equality.

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**CONSTRUCTION-NORMATIVE ANALYSIS:  
EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN WORKING  
FAMILIES**

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**Afthon Yazid, Arif Sugitanata**

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