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The Influence of Religious Discourse in the *Keputrian* Program on Gender Identity Construction among Female Secondary School Students

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the association between religious discourse within *keputrian* programs and four dimensions of gender identity construction among female students in senior high schools and equivalent institutions in West Java Province, Indonesia. A quantitative survey design was employed with 370 female students from seven purposively selected schools. Data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, measurement model assessment, the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC), and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4. The results showed that religious discourse was positively and significantly associated with all four dimensions of gender identity construction, explaining 68.9% of the variance in Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, 16.7% in Negotiation and Resistance, 42.1% in Identity Construction through Appearance, and 28.7% in Agency in Gender Identity Construction. These findings suggest that the *keputrian* program functions not only to strengthen religious knowledge and character but also as an institutional space where gender identity is constructed and given meaning. The findings highlight the importance of creating educational spaces in which religious values can be conveyed without reinforcing gender stereotypes and restrictions on women's roles, thereby enabling Islamic education to contribute to the development of more equitable and equal identities.

Keywords: religious discourse, *keputrian* program, gender identity, islamic education, gender equity.

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INTRODUCTION

Schools have a responsibility to shape students' character through not only formal learning processes but also activities designed to instill values, norms, and behaviors aligned with educational objectives (Anisah, 2023; Saryanto et al., 2023). In Indonesia, religious education plays an important role in this process because it is regarded as contributing to the development of students' moral, spiritual, and social dimensions (Jakandar et al., 2025; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). In practice, religious education occurs not only in the classroom but also through various self-development programs that give students opportunities to internalize religious teachings in everyday life (Megawati & Sulisworo, 2025; Muis, 2026). Therefore, schools hold a strategic position as environments that not only transfer knowledge but also serves as a social environment where students encounter and interpret values that can shape the way they understand themselves and their social surroundings.

One form of religious education implemented in schools is the *keputrian* program, an activity specifically organized for female students. The program is generally conducted while male students attend Friday prayers or at other times designated by school policy (Kamila

et al., 2026; Ulviyah et al., 2025). The topics extend beyond religious worship to include appropriate dress, social etiquette, morals, reproductive health, women's responsibilities, and values related to women's lives from an Islamic perspective. Some schools also integrate practical activities, such as cooking class and household management, as part of education specifically designed for female students (Febrianty et al., 2024; Ulviyah et al., 2025). The diversity of topics demonstrates that the *keputrian* program functions not only as a medium for transmitting religious values but also as a space for learning about womens social roles.

The dissemination of women-centered materials based on religious education has the potential to shape gender identity, a topic that has become an issue in various countries. Research in Central and South Asia shows that religious education materials and textbooks still largely represent women in domestic and traditional roles (Ozawa et al., 2026; Taieb, 2026). In Afghanistan, religious education for women is considered to contribute to maintaining gender norms that limit women's social space (Elkahlout et al., 2026; Rahimi & Din, 2024). Meanwhile, religious education practices in the United Kingdom have sparked debate over how schools address gender identity and sexuality while upholding principles of diversity and human rights (Moore, 2025; Parkinson, 2023). These differences indicate that religious education functions not only to transmit religious knowledge but also as a discursive arena where meanings of gender identity are produced, reproduced, and negotiated across diverse social and cultural contexts.

In this study, religious discourse is defined as exposure to religious messages, values, norms, and teachings systematically conveyed through the *keputrian* program. This exposure occurs through instructional materials, teacher presentations, school regulations, and activities that encourage female students to understand and apply religious values in everyday life. Meanwhile, gender identity construction refers to the process through which female students develop perceptions of their identity, roles, and responsibilities as women through interactions with their social environment (Prior, 2023; Stewart & Brown, 2023). From Michel Foucault's perspective on discourse, knowledge produced by educational institutions plays a role in shaping how individuals understand themselves (Kaldybekov et al., 2024; Poorghorban, 2023). Furthermore, Judith Butler explains that gender identity develops through the repetition of social norms that are continuously practiced in everyday life (Butler, 2025). Based on these perspectives, the more intensive the exposure to religious discourse received by female students, the greater the likelihood that these values will be internalized in the construction of their gender identity.

Various studies have shown that the *keputrian* program positively impacts religious knowledge, character development, and moral strength among female students (Sarie & Susilo, 2026). Other studies also show that the program contributes to developing discipline, social ethics, and an understanding of women's roles in society (Hidayah & Purnomo, 2025; Novianti et al., 2023). However, the religious values conveyed through the *keputrian* program about women's roles, dress, etiquette, and responsibilities may also indirectly shape students' understanding of gender identity and roles. This aspect remains empirically underexplored, particularly from a gender-equity perspective in Islamic education at the secondary school level in Indonesia.

Accordingly, this study examines how religious discourse within the *keputrian* program influences gender identity construction among female students in senior high schools and equivalent institutions in West Java Province, Indonesia. Drawing on Foucault's perspective on discourse, power, and normalization and Butler's

theory of gender performativity, the study understands gender identity construction as a social process through which gendered meanings are formed, interpreted, negotiated, and expressed through everyday practices. The study examines four dimensions of gender identity construction: Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, Negotiation and Resistance, Identity Construction through Appearance, and Agency in Gender Identity Construction. The study hypothesizes that religious discourse within the *keputrian* program is positively associated with each dimension.

By examining these relationships quantitatively, the study seeks to contribute empirical evidence to sociological discussions of religious discourse, gender identity, and school-based religious education, particularly in understanding how institutional discourse may shape. At the same time, it does not necessarily determine how female students construct and express their gender identities. It also aims to contribute to the evaluation and development of school-based character education programs that promote religious values while remaining responsive to gender equity.

METHOD

Research Procedures

This study used a quantitative survey to examine the influence of religious discourse in the keputrian program on four dimensions of gender identity construction: interpretation of Institutional Discourse, negotiation and resistance to gender norms, identity construction through appearance, and agency in gender identity construction. The study was conducted from June to July 2026 in seven senior high schools and equivalent institutions in West Java Province, Indonesia.

The schools were purposively selected based on predetermined geographical and institutional characteristics within West Java Province, including rural areas (Sukabumi Regency and Ciamis Regency), suburban areas (Tasikmalaya City, Bogor Regency, and Bekasi Regency), and urban areas (Depok City and Bandung City). The selected institutions included public and private senior high schools and madrasahs. Based on the preliminary study, the selected schools implemented keputrian programs in a structured, routine manner, had conducted the programs for at least one semester, and included religious materials.

The preliminary study also showed that none of the seven schools had a standardized keputrian curriculum or formal curriculum guidelines. The study therefore developed the content and implementation according to each school's educational context and needs. Including these schools allowed the study to examine religious discourse within keputrian across purposively selected educational settings, rather than focusing on a single school or institutional type. The selection aimed to provide contextual coverage of the study area and was not intended to statistically represent all secondary schools in West Java Province.

Participants

The study population consisted of all female students participating in the keputrian program across the seven schools. The total population identified from the seven participating schools was 3,999 female students, which served as the population reference for determining the sample size.

The sample size was initially determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, yielding a minimum sample size of 364 respondents. A total of 370 female students subsequently participated in the survey. The respondents were then proportionally distributed using proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure that the sample allocation across the seven

schools reflected their respective shares of the study population.

Instruments

Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The research instrument included two variables: religious discourse within the keputrian program (independent variable, X) and the construction of gender identity among female students (dependent variable, Y). Each variable was measured using statement items developed by adapting and synthesizing previous studies. The operationalization of the variables is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Operationalization of research variables

Variable	Dimensions	Development Resources
Religious discourse within the *keputrian* program (X)	Behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and internalization of religious discourse.	(Hidayah & Purnomo, 2025; Novianti et al., 2023; Ulviyal et al., 2025); Burhanudin et al., 2023; Maheshwari, 2023)
The construction of gender identity (Y)	Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, negotiation and resistance to gender norms, identity construction through appearance, and agency in gender identity construction	(Butler, 2025; Hidayah & Purnomo, 2025; Maheshwari 2023; Pebiyanti et al., 2023)

Based on Table 1, the indicators reflect the understanding that gender identity is formed, interpreted, negotiated, and expressed through social processes (Butler, 2025; Maheshwari, 2023). Accordingly, the instrument measured four related but distinct dimensions: institutional discourse, negotiation and resistance to gender norms, identity construction through appearance, and agency in gender identity construction. These dimensions were analyzed separately rather than combined into a single composite score to preserve their conceptual differences.

Before the main study, the instrument was assessed for content validity by two experts in educational sociology and gender studies. It was then pilot-tested with 30 respondents using Corrected Item–Total Correlation, with all items exceeding the critical value ($r > 0.361$). Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.93 for religious discourse within the *keputrian* program and 0.90 for gender identity construction. These results indicated acceptable internal consistency and preliminary item validity for the main study.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using R and SmartPLS 4. Descriptive statistics were first used to summarize the study variables and their dimensions. The measurement model was evaluated using SmartPLS 4 through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), including outer loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Based on the measurement evaluation and the indicator elimination procedure recommended by Hair et al. (2022), the final instrument retained 15 indicators for X and 17 indicators for Y. Because respondents were nested within seven schools, ICC was also examined and showed low between-school clustering, with ICC values ranging from 0.0076 to 0.0384; therefore, multilevel modeling was not pursued.

The measurement model was evaluated through outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, AVE, and HTMT. The structural model examined the relationship between Religious Discourse (X) and four dimensions of Gender Identity Construction:

Interpretation of Institutional Discourse (Y1), Negotiation and Resistance (Y2), Identity Construction through Appearance (Y3), and Agency in Gender Identity Construction (Y4). R^2 was used to assess the explained variance of each endogenous construct. In contrast, f^2 assessed the effect size of X, and path coefficients (â) indicated the direction and magnitude of the structural relationships (Hair et al., 2022). Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples, a two-tailed significance level of 5% (á = 0.05), and t-statistics, p-values, and bootstrap confidence intervals (Hair et al., 2022).

Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from each participating school before data collection began. Because participants were secondary school students within the child or adolescent age range, the study also followed required procedures for obtaining consent before distributing the questionnaire. Parents or legal guardians were informed about the study and provided consent for their children to participate, while students were informed about the study's purpose and procedures and participated voluntarily. Participation was voluntary, and students could decline.

The identities of the respondents and participating schools were kept anonymous and were used solely for academic purposes. All collected data were treated confidentially to protect participants' and schools' privacy.

■ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Descriptive analysis examined the distribution of scores across the four dimensions of religious discourse within the *keputrian* program and the four dimensions of gender identity construction among female students. The results indicate generally high levels of religious engagement and internalization, while gender identity construction also showed relatively high scores, with some variation across dimensions.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the study variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Religious Discourse (X)				
Behavioral Engagement	4.026	0.619	2.33	5.00
Emotional Engagement	4.276	0.592	2.25	5.00
Cognitive Engagement	4.092	0.524	2.75	5.00
Internalization of Religious Discourse	4.226	0.574	2.25	5.00
Gender Identity Construction (Y)				
Interpretation of Institutional Discourse	4.169	0.556	1.80	5.00
Negotiation and Resistance	3.844	0.609	2.33	5.00
Identity Construction through Appearance	4.095	0.545	2.75	5.00
Agency in Gender Identity Construction	4.205	0.553	3.00	5.00

The descriptive findings suggest that students generally reported positive engagement with religious discourse in the *keputrian* program. Among the dimensions of gender identity construction, Agency in Gender Identity Construction, Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, and Identity Construction through Appearance showed relatively higher scores, whereas Negotiation and Resistance was comparatively lower. This variation suggests that students may engage with religious and gender-related expectations in different ways, reflecting

an ongoing process of interpreting, negotiating, and expressing gender identity within their social environment.

Distribution of Religious Discourse across Dimensions

Overall, responses clustered in the high and very high categories, with only a small number in the low category and none in the very low category. Emotional Engagement and Internalization of Religious Discourse showed relatively larger proportions of responses in the very high category. At the same time, Behavioral Engagement and Cognitive Engagement were more evenly distributed between the high and very high categories. Overall, the distribution suggests that students generally reported high levels of engagement with and internalization of religious discourse across the four dimensions. However, engagement varied somewhat across dimensions. Figure 1 shows the distribution of students' responses across the four dimensions of religious discourse within the *keputrian* program.

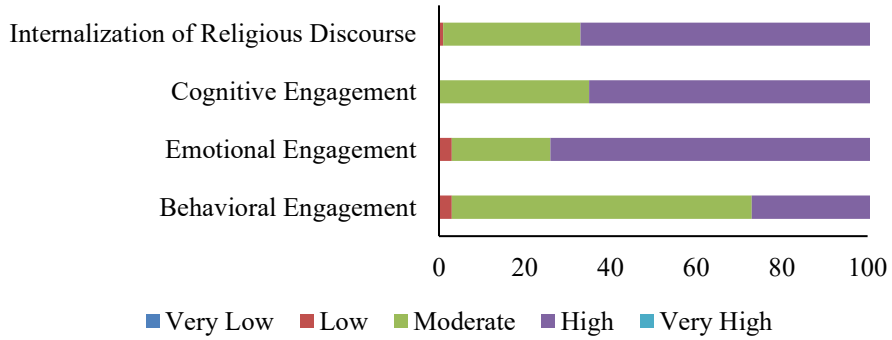


Figure 1. Distribution of religious discourse across instrument dimensions

Distribution of Gender Identity Construction across Dimensions

Overall, responses clustered in the high and very high categories, though some variation appeared across dimensions. Institutional Discourse showed responses mainly in the high and very high categories, while Negotiation and Resistance had a larger concentration in the moderate and high categories. Identity Construction through Appearance and Agency in Gender Identity Construction also fell predominantly into the high and very high categories, with no responses in the low or very low categories. These patterns indicate that students expressed different dimensions of gender identity construction at varying levels, reflecting

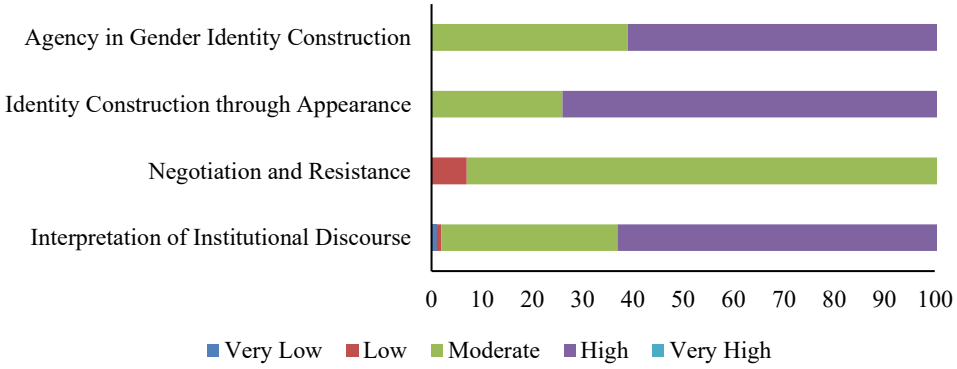


Figure 2. Distribution of gender identity construction across instrument dimensions

the multidimensional nature of how they interpret institutional discourse, negotiate gender-related expectations, construct identity through appearance, and exercise agency. Figure 2 presents the distribution of students' responses across the four dimensions of gender identity construction.

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model showed that the retained indicators had adequate reliability and convergent validity. Although some indicators had relatively lower loadings, they were retained because they remained theoretically relevant and the overall measurement quality was acceptable. Following Hair et al. (2022), indicators with loadings between 0.40 and 0.708 can be retained when supported by other reliability and validity evidence. As shown in Table 3, all constructs met the required criteria for composite reliability and AVE.

Discriminant validity (HTMT): All construct pairs were below 0.90 except Religious Discourse-Institutional Discourse (HTMT = 0.940), indicating a potential discriminant validity concern for this pair.

Table 3. Measurement model evaluation

Construct	Outer Loading Range	Cronbach's α	rho_A	rho_C	AVE	Decision
Religious Discourse (X)	0.620–0.795	0.929	0.932	0.938	0.506	Retained
Interpretation of Institutional Discourse (Y1)	0.698–0.827	0.830	0.833	0.881	0.597	Retained
Negotiation and Resistance (Y2)	0.528–0.900	0.595	0.803	0.750	0.512	Retained
Identity Construction through Appearance (Y3)	0.610–0.780	0.679	0.702	0.803	0.507	Retained
Agency in Gender Identity Construction (Y4)	0.707–0.848	0.845	0.862	0.888	0.615	Retained

Discriminant validity was generally supported, as most HTMT values were below 0.90. However, the HTMT value between Religious Discourse and Interpretation of Institutional Discourse was 0.940, indicating some empirical overlap between the two constructs. This overlap is understandable because students encounter and interpret institutional discourse within the broader religious discourse of the *keputrian* program. Overall, the measurement model was considered adequate for further structural analysis.

Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model was assessed to understand how well religious discourse explains differences across the four dimensions of Gender Identity Construction. The results show that its explanatory role varies across these dimensions. In other words, students' experiences of religious discourse are related to some aspects of gender identity construction more strongly than to others.

R^2 was used to assess how much of the variation in each dimension could be explained by Religious Discourse. Meanwhile, f^2 was used to assess the predictor's practical contribution, with values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 generally

Table 4. Structural model evaluation

Endogenous Construct	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	f^2	Interpretation of f^2
Interpretation of Institutional Discourse	0.689	0.689	2.219	Large
Negotiation and Resistance	0.167	0.165	0.201	Medium
Identity Construction through Appearance	0.421	0.419	0.727	Large
Agency in Gender Identity Construction	0.287	0.285	0.403	Large

Source: Author's own analysis using SmartPLS 4.

indicating small, medium, and large effects, respectively (Hair et al., 2022). Based on these criteria, the model shows substantial explanatory contributions for several dimensions, while the contribution to Negotiation and Resistance is comparatively more moderate. This pattern suggests that religious discourse may be more closely connected to some ways students understand and express gender identity than to their negotiation or resistance toward gender-related expectations.

Overall, these findings indicate that the relationship between religious discourse and gender identity construction varies across dimensions. Therefore, we tested hypotheses separately for each dimension of gender identity construction to examine these relationships more closely.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples and a two-tailed significance level of 5%. The results showed that Religious Discourse in the *Keputrian* Program had a positive and statistically significant relationship with all four dimensions of gender identity construction. This means that higher levels of religious discourse were associated with higher scores on each dimension examined. However, the strength of these relationships differed across dimensions, indicating that religious discourse related to gender identity construction in different ways.

All four proposed relationships were supported, confirming positive, significant relationships between Religious Discourse in the *Keputrian* Program and each dimension of Gender Identity Construction. In terms of explained variance, Religious Discourse accounted for 68.9% of the variance in Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, 16.7% in Negotiation and Resistance, 42.1% in Identity Construction through Appearance, and 28.7% in Agency in Gender Identity Construction. The remaining 31.1%, 83.3%, 57.9%, and 71.3%,

Table 5. Hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Structural Path	β	*t*	*p*	Decision
H1	Religious Discourse → Interpretation of Institutional Discourse	0.830	49.392	< .001	Supported
H2	Religious Discourse → Negotiation and Resistance	0.409	8.874	< .001	Supported
H3	Religious Discourse → Identity Construction through Appearance	0.649	22.543	< .001	Supported
H4	Religious Discourse → Agency in Gender Identity Construction	0.536	13.332	< .001	Supported

Note. β = standardized path coefficient; t = bootstrapped t-statistic; p = two-tailed significance level.

respectively, represent variance not explained by the current model. These remaining proportions suggest that other factors may also shape students' gender identity construction and could be examined in future research.

Religious Discourse as an Institutional Mechanism in Gender Identity Construction

The findings indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between religious discourse within the *keputrian* program and each dimension of gender identity construction among female students. The positive path coefficients indicate that higher levels of religious discourse are associated with higher scores across the four dimensions of gender identity construction. This finding suggests that the *keputrian* program functions not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as an institutional space in which students interpret, negotiate, and express gendered understandings of themselves as women. The R^2 values varied across the four dimensions, with religious discourse explaining 68.9% of the variance in Interpretation of Institutional Discourse, 16.7% in Negotiation and Resistance, 42.1% in Identity Construction through Appearance, and 28.7% in Agency in Gender Identity Construction. These differences indicate that religious discourse is associated with the dimensions of gender identity construction to different extents.

The findings further show that religious education in schools extends beyond knowledge transmission and also functions as a socialization mechanism through which students develop understandings of their identities, responsibilities, and social positions as women. Accordingly, the *keputrian* program can be understood as an institutional space in which religious values are communicated and repeatedly practiced, providing meanings through which female students may interpret and construct their gender identities. This finding reinforces previous studies that have identified the *keputrian* program as a medium for the internalization of religious values, character development, and the cultivation of moral conduct among female students (Burhanudin et al., 2023; Febrianty et al., 2024; Hidayah & Purnomo, 2025; Kamila et al., 2026; Novianti et al., 2023; Sarie & Susilo, 2026; Ulviyah et al., 2025). Previous research has generally emphasized the program's contribution to improving religious understanding, discipline, and moral responsibility among Muslim women. The present study extends this perspective by examining how these educational processes are statistically associated with distinct dimensions of gender identity construction.

This extension matters because the relationship between religious education and female students' gender identities cannot be understood solely in terms of religious knowledge or moral development. The values and norms communicated through the program may also provide frameworks through which students interpret femininity, social responsibilities, appropriate behavior, and their position as women. Thus, these findings contribute to the literature by linking the study of *keputrian* to the sociological process of gender identity construction. Rather than viewing the program solely as a space for religious instruction, this study highlights its role as an institutional setting in which religious meanings and gendered understandings are communicated, interpreted, and potentially reproduced through educational practices.

Interpreting the Findings through Michel Foucault's Discourse Perspective

The findings align with Michel Foucault's perspective, which conceptualizes discourse as a mechanism for producing knowledge that simultaneously generates relations of power (Poorghorban, 2023; Zhiyi, 2023). In educational

institutions, schools have the legitimacy to determine which forms of knowledge count as valid, which values are desirable, and which behaviors students are expected to follow (Hanafiah et al., 2022; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). In this role, schools do not merely transmit religious teachings but also provide interpretive frameworks through which students can understand themselves and their social environments (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Purnama & Asdlori, 2023; Robinson, 2022). The *keputrian* program can serve as one such space for producing discourse. Topics concerning dress, moral conduct, social etiquette, women's responsibilities, family relations, and concepts of religious piety should not be understood solely as forms of social control but also as practices that may influence the formation of female students' identities.

This issue is particularly relevant within the Indonesian sociocultural context, where schools play an important role in shaping young people's understandings of gender relations. Previous studies in different sociocultural settings show that religious education can shape how women and men are represented and understood. In Central and South Asian contexts, for example, religious educational materials have often been associated with representations of women that emphasize domestic and traditional roles, while research in Afghanistan has highlighted the role of religious education in maintaining gender norms that may restrict women's social space (Elkahlout et al., 2026; Ozawa et al., 2026; Rahimi & Din, 2024; Taieb, 2026). In other contexts, such as the United Kingdom, religious education has also become a site of debate over how schools negotiate religious values, gender identity, diversity, and human rights (Moore, 2025; Parkinson, 2023). Taken together, these studies suggest that religious education is not simply a means of transmitting religious knowledge but can also become a space where gender meanings are communicated, interpreted, and negotiated. The present study extends this discussion to the Indonesian context by showing that religious discourse within the *keputrian* program is positively and significantly associated with multiple dimensions of female students' gender identity construction. However, the strength of these relationships varies across dimensions.

The *keputrian* program plays a strategic role in this process because it provides a structured, recurring educational setting where students engage with morality, social roles, responsibilities, bodily practices, and religious life. The findings therefore highlight the importance of schools and organized educational practices in understanding how religious discourse becomes part of students' everyday processes of gender formation. Schools are not only places where religious messages are delivered; through structured programs, learning materials, teachers, and repeated educational practices, they provide institutional settings in which particular understandings of femininity and gender relations can be reinforced and developed (Donovan et al., 2023; van Leent & Spina, 2023). The inclusion of seven schools across rural, suburban, and urban contexts in West Java further indicates that this issue deserves attention beyond a single institutional setting. However, the findings cannot be generalized to all Indonesian schools. Accordingly, *keputrian* programs and religious education curricula should consider not only the transmission of religious knowledge but also how educational content and practices communicate particular understandings of gender while creating space for dignity, mutual respect, fairness, and equitable relationships between women and men.

Nevertheless, Foucault also emphasizes that power relations are never absolute. Power operates through dynamic relations that allow space for interpretation, negotiation, and resistance (Poorghorban, 2023; Zhiyi, 2023). Therefore, although this study shows a positive,

statistically significant association, the findings should not be interpreted as indicating that all students internalize religious discourse in the same way. The discourse encountered through the *keputrian* program may serve as a framework that shapes the meanings and norms available to students. In contrast, students may respond to these norms in different ways, through acceptance, interpretation, negotiation, or resistance. This perspective provides a strong basis for examining how gender identities are situated within institutional discourse and continuously interpreted, negotiated, and expressed through students' everyday practices and agency.

Gender Identity Construction as a Social Process: A Judith Butler Perspective

This study's findings can also be understood through Judith Butler's performativity theory, which views gender identity as continually produced through the repetition of social norms and practices in everyday life (Butler, 2025). From this perspective, gender identity is not fixed but is continuously formed through social practices, including language, actions, symbols, and interactions with others. The *keputrian* program can provide one institutional setting where these processes take place. Repeated learning materials, behavioral expectations, and interactions with teachers and peers may make particular understandings of femininity familiar and meaningful in students' everyday experiences (Nurmansyah et al., 2025; Wadesango, 2025).

The positive path coefficients indicate that higher levels of religious discourse within the *keputrian* program are associated with higher levels of gender identity construction across the four dimensions measured in this study. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that *keputrian* provides female students with structured learning about not only religious practices but also dress, social etiquette, moral conduct, reproductive health, women's responsibilities, and other aspects of women's lives from an Islamic perspective (Febrianty et al., 2024; Kamila et al., 2026; Ulviyah et al., 2025). Some programs also include practical activities related to domestic skills, suggesting that *keputrian* may extend into everyday understandings of women's roles and responsibilities (Febrianty et al., 2024; Ulviyah et al., 2025). Thus, gender identity is not formed through a single learning process, but through the accumulation of repeated educational experiences and social practices (Eschenbacher & Weber, 2023; Nordmarken, 2023). The present finding therefore suggests that the religious and moral content of *keputrian* may become part of the everyday processes through which femininity is learned, interpreted, and expressed.

At the same time, this finding should not be interpreted as evidence that the *keputrian* program determines students' gender identities in a uniform or permanent manner. Butler emphasizes that repeating norms does not necessarily produce fixed conformity. Individuals can interpret, adapt, and even negotiate the norms they encounter (Butler, 2025). The PLS-SEM results should therefore not be interpreted as directly measuring the full complexity of gender performativity, including resistance and agency, as theorized by Butler. The quantitative model captures the measured dimensions of gender identity construction, while interpretation, negotiation, resistance, and agency represent processes through which students may respond differently to the norms they encounter. In this sense, a positive association between religious discourse and gender identity construction does not mean that all students internalize the same norms or construct identical gender identities.

The *keputrian* program can simultaneously function as a space for religious socialization and as a site where gender norms are encountered, repeated, interpreted, and potentially negotiated.

Its role in gender identity construction should therefore be understood as part of an ongoing social process rather than as a uniform or permanent outcome. Consequently, future *keputrian* programs should not be limited to strengthening female students' religiosity and moral conduct; they should also consider how religious teachings are communicated in relation to dignity, opportunities, responsibilities, and relationships between women and men. In this way, Islamic values can provide a foundation for creating educational environments that are religiously meaningful, respect students' agency, and respond to diverse gender experiences and contemporary social challenges.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that religious discourse within the *keputrian* program is positively and statistically significantly associated with gender identity construction among female senior high school students and those in equivalent institutions in West Java Province. The association was observed across all four dimensions of gender identity construction, although its strength varied, with R^2 values ranging from 16.7% for Negotiation and Resistance to 68.9% for Interpretation of Institutional Discourse. These findings indicate that the *keputrian* program functions not only to strengthen religious knowledge and character but also as an institutional space for internalizing religious values through which students understand, interpret, and construct their identities, roles, and responsibilities as women. Based on these findings, schools are encouraged to continue developing *keputrian* programs by integrating religious values that promote reflection, critical thinking, and respect for gender equality while maintaining the principles of religious teachings. Teachers and program facilitators are expected to present the material contextually so that students not only understand religious values but also have opportunities to interpret and negotiate them in relation to their social experiences. For education policymakers, these findings may inform the development of religion-based character education policies that incorporate principles of equality and inclusivity. Future research should examine other factors, such as family, peers, digital media, and school culture, to better understand how adolescents construct gender identity.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI USAGE IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used Gemini to refine language, translate, and improve sentence clarity. The author(s) reviewed and revised the content as necessary and accept full responsibility for the final content of the article.

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