

Women in German Islamic Organizations

Wazni Azwar*

Department of Government Studies

Universitas Riau

Pekanbaru, Indonesia

*wazni@lecturer.unri.ac.id

Abstract—Germany is part of the European Union and has taken pivotal roles among the other Members States. Germany faces trend as an immigrant country which currently more than ten per cent of population. More than 20 per cent of immigrant in Germany has background Turkey as ethnic origin. More than 85 per cent immigrant with Turkey background has affiliated with Islam as religion. Nowadays Germany has largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France. The active participation in society's affairs is one of the key elements of integration and should be accompanied by legal equality in the religious sector, the relationship between the state and the civil society is pivotal. Feminism is one of paradigm in the European Union and in the Member States scholarship. Moreover, woman has special position on Islamic view. Nowadays the term Islamic feminism is uprising around the globe. The important question that becomes research question is does Islamic feminism help in the debate for integration? To what extend? It is most important as a basic and fundamental research to comprehensive understanding the Muslim living in Germany. For answering this research question, I tend to make a hypothesis that Islamic feminism help in debate for integration which 21st century is the time of transmission the concept of Islamic feminism which is connected with the proposal to support integration process in the European Union and in the Member States towards good governance system. This can be proven by active participation of women in Germany Islamic organization. The participation aims to increase capacity development of Muslim women. This participation also arises integration awareness that can be described by some patterns which divided based on data from an empirical research using sequential exploratory method.

Keywords: *Muslim women, integration, participation, Germany, Islamic organization*

I. INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural diffusion of democratic ideas and forceful reappearance of ethnic religious issue in public affairs are two issues in globalization. The modern West transformed by Western political thought with industrialization, education, development of a middle class and pressures for popular political participation increase [1]. Moreover, democracy requires two elements. First, a civic organization characterized by voluntarism, independent associations, and a balance of powers between state and society as well as among civil organizations themselves. Second, a public culture draws on separate experiences to promote universal habits of participation and tolerance. Thus, the state has functions both

as a guardian of public civility and a vehicle of the popular will [1]. Cohen and Arato constitute that civil society is different with state and market. But, they are actors of democracy transition. Civil society is new collective action which classification not based on class, related by public institution which comes from society which this institution is formal and legal [2]. This research tends to look more deeply that civil society in support of the state as schools of citizenship [3].

Indonesia is well known in term the diversity of modern Muslim politics [1]. Muslim women in Indonesia have a specific pattern that neither part of feminism that associated with Western value. Muslim women who joined Islamic organizations such as Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, both are the biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia, although they are actively participating in society, they are not supporting feminism issue [4]. Indonesia, a nation-state with fourth populous in the world and the biggest population which Islam as majority belief of citizens, obviously has a strong history with Islam in the past and nowadays. Indonesian Independence Day is on August 17th 1945, however Nahdhatul Ulama established in 1926 and Muhammadiyah established in 1912. It means that the age of both organizations is elder than the age of nation-state. It also means that Islamic value can be seen as the core value of citizen. Thus, it is normal when many of citizens rejected the idea of feminism.

Feminism and Western value are intertwined. Developed countries spread the Western value to developing countries. Feminism which spread in Muslim majority countries such as Iran State (Valentine Moghadam, Afsaneh Najmabadi and Ziba Mir-Hosseini), Arab (Miriam Cooke), Egypt (Margot Badron) and South Africa (Na'eem Jeenah), become new term "Islamic Feminism" [5]. Interestingly, in developed countries and the Member of the European Union, such as Germany, Muslim women who joined Islamic organizations, DITIB [6] and IGMG [7] do not associate their activities as part of feminism. It means that although they live in Western countries, they adopt and adapt Western value, except feminism. As Muslim, they implement Islamic value in daily life.

Nation state theory based on Westphalia model of governance, thus more deeply research about good governance system implemented in Germany is good opportunity to learn and gain knowledge in the field of political science and government studies. The presence of Muslim in Western countries after attack 11/9 does not result the second attack

with bombing issue Islam is terrorism second edition. It means that Muslim in Western countries make efforts to be good citizens. Probably, this condition makes a sharply difference with three geographic and cultural tendencies of current transnational Islamist movement, namely the Sunni Arab Middle East, the Sunni Indian subcontinent and Irano- Shiism [8].

Many of second generation still speak strong bonds to Germany due to socialized in German schools. Moreover, individuals who are not fully integrated into the religious or ethnic community or into the host society may be more open to radical action [9]. Islamic organization in Germany may accommodate aspects of Islamic principles and laws in order to be moral and vibrant communities that practice Islam within the margin of German law [10]. Islamic organization takes part for preserving the social capital of democracy. Actively participation of women members leads them to be more unfold towards complexities of social life. Reinterpretation of religious ideas is needed, thus Islamic organization can play a central role in the development and consolidation of democracy [10]. This paper presents actively participation of women members of IGMG in public sphere.

II. METHODS

This study uses a sequential exploration method. The data used are data from empirical research to explain patterns. Interview with Handan Yazici, a woman leader of IGMG has given a general description of women in Germany Islamic Organizations which are supported by several documents related to members, funding’s, activities, etc.

III. RESULTS

The term Islamic feminism was born in the early twenty-first century on Barcelona Conference in October 2005 entitled ‘First Islamic Congress on Islamic Feminism’. Around 400 people from different countries demonstrate the final declaration that women define themselves as Islamic feminists are in a search of legitimacy and they took the floor to make their voices heard with three messages.

The first message is to Islamic groups. The message that Quran does not have a single interpretation and the understanding that relegates the woman into secondary position stems not from the Quran. The second message is targeted towards Muslim women. Muslim women can produce a just and egalitarian Islamic understanding through a new interpretation of Islam. For this, Muslim women should take action. The last message is to the globally developed feminist groups. The message given to them is that they should abandon the universal-essentialist approach of global feminism and accept that women might have different problems stemming from different social conditions. In other words, they might develop different feminisms. In short, they demand white Western feminist movements to stop treating them like second-class women [11].

European legal systems guarantee the fundamental human right of religious freedom that implies the right to conversion

and the freedom to proselytize [12]. Limping separation system between church and state offers religious communities have independently administered as corporation under law and provide certain specific rights in Germany [13]. Germany is well known both as first country with largest number of Turkish citizens and second country with largest Muslim in European countries [14].

TABLE I. COUNTRIES WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF TURKISH CITIZENS

No	Country	Est. Turkish population 2010 (x1000)	Population 2010 (x1000)	Est. Turkish population (%)
1.	Germany	2,900	81,802	3.55
2.	France	370	64,659	0.57
3.	Netherlands	395	16,575	2.38
4.	Belgium	230	10,840	2.12
5.	Austria	185	8,351	2.22
6.	Sweden	100	9,378	1.07
7.	Denmark	60	5,535	1.08

Source: [14]

TABLE II. MUSLIM IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

No	Country	Est. Muslim population 2010 (x1000)	Est. Muslim population (%)	Turkish as % of Muslim population
1.	Germany	4,200	5.13	69
2.	France	4,800	7.42	8
3.	Netherlands	925	5.58	43
4.	Belgium	640	5.90	36
5.	Austria	475	5.69	39
6.	Sweden	452	4.82	22
7.	Denmark	228	4.12	26

Note: These figures are based on the 2012 statistical survey of Pew Research Centre in Washington, DC. They use demographic data and not religious affiliation. It provides us at least with some consistency, but the figures are certainly too high. In addition, we made use of the recent version of the Yearbook of Muslims in Europe published by Brill (Nielsen et al., 2013). The Yearbook gives a much more accurate picture as far as religious affiliation and practice are concerned. Source: [14]

The role of Muslim women in Western societies is an important topic, not least because of public discourses on gender equality and female oppression, which are often linked to the topic of Islamic traditions and practices.

“In addition to these public debates in which the Islamic organizations have to take a stance, Muslim women are also relevant to Islamic organizations due to their sheer number and their religiosity. Muslim women constitute nearly 50% of the Muslim population in Germany, and 41% of Muslim women regard themselves as very religious, as compared to 31% of Muslim men. The fact that issues which concerns Muslim women are often decided by the German courts (such as the headscarf debate and exemptions for Muslim girls from swimming lessons and class trips) has attracted much public attention and has led to organizational activities to address these issues [15].”

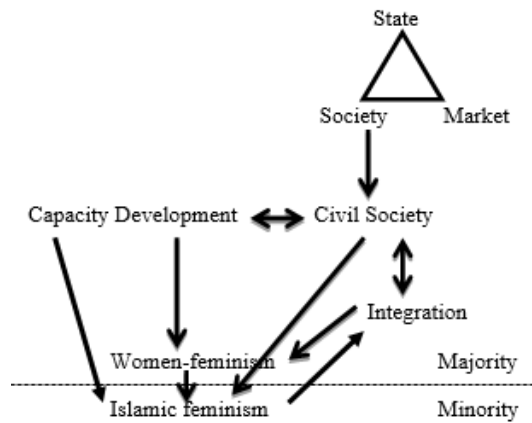


Fig. 1. The position of Islamic feminism in good governance system of Western country.

Freedom of assembly, association and freedom of movement interrelated based on Art 11 of Constitution. Assembly for religious purpose can create religious association and can have access to any religious place of worship [16]. This research tends to find pattern of Muslim women participation in Germany society as part of integration process. During my research in Germany, I tend to make two assumptions. Firstly, the activity of women in Islamic organization in Germany has the same pattern with women in Islamic organization in Indonesia. It means that the goal of women participate in Islamic organization are similar. However, the differences can be found relating the duration of activities. Secondly, the geographic influences the rate of activity is needed to look more deeply. Germany has four seasons compared with Indonesia has two seasons. How women in Germany Islamic organization manage their activity during these four seasons is interesting to me. I am as an Indonesian who familiar with two seasons could be easy to understand how women in Islamic organization in Germany adapt and adopt this situation with using technology. They are implementing offline and online interaction.

Nahdhatul Ulama has a special organization for women members that known as Muslimat Nahdhatul Ulama which has ten departments namely Department of Organization and Membership, Department of Education and Recruitment, Department of Social and Environment, Department of Health and Demography, Department of Dawah and Social Development, Department of Economics, Co-operation, and Agro-business, Department of Manpower, Department of Law and Advocate, Department of Research, Development, Communication and Information and Department of Foreign Affairs and Network Development. Based on Progress Report Muslimat Nahdhatul Ulama in 2013, Department of Law and Advocate has used website for rubric of law consultation. Unfortunately, the rubric was empty due to unused by women members.

At this moment, in my opinion, it can be said that women in Germany Islamic organization use online interaction more frequently than Indonesia Islamic organization. Now the question is to what extend the online interaction functioning effectively and efficiently in Germany Islamic organization? However, to proof it need more research as comparative

research next time if needed it. What the main point is although Women in Germany Islamic organization have same pattern with the other countries, especially Indonesia as a country with the most populous Muslim country, I think they have different challenges to survive for running their organization. Meanwhile I tend to make an opinion that these challenges are opportunities to make collaboration between women in Germany Islamic organization and women in Indonesia Islamic organization whatever their purposes for goodness.

Germany is a locus for this research. The research project concentrated on the period between 2006 and 2016 covering the time during a decade of implementation of German Islamic Conference 1 that came into force or the relevant new institutional solution has been implemented. The realization of the concept of Islamic feminism includes a number of detail Germany Islamic organization initiatives, of which the research project refers to the latest ones. The research concerns one of the most significant problems such the online functioning of Islamic organization in theory and in practice. The objectives are formulated in reaction to the discussion concerning the role of the Germany state in 21st century for integrating Muslim towards good governance system. The problem of integration into mainstream Western societies is further exacerbated by overt and subtle of racism, as well as by the tendency to view Islam as an intrusion into Western culture.

Western country, West European although is known as developed country obviously development is still continuing. Development as a planning changed, need careful formulation of policy that came from evaluation policy which is applying strategic management, thus sustainable development occurs successfully. Germany, which is the core of finance of European Union take pivotal task in globalization and obviously industrial revolution. Immigrant lands and the land of ideas, both coherently describe how Germany is. What is effect from this trend?

High technology, modern industry, high salary and high health care are several advantages living in Germany. The question is, have they got it? Living in Germany as immigrant is not easy. Many of them living in rural area or poor area and that can be said that they have under lower income and under lower status. Nowadays, many of them are having second generation and third generation. The first generation probably many of them are still under lower status because of lack of education which influence to lower income. How about second generation and third generation? For instance, many of them come to Germany in 1960 when age was 25 years old. In 1965, they have family in Germany. After 25 years forward, their children arise and also have family in 1990, and after 25 years forward again (2015), their grandchildren arise and also ready to have family in Germany. The question is how they arrange their family? How about their income and status? Where are they live? Whether first generation shows the same pattern with second generation and third generation? Most important question I think that how about the education of second generation and third generation?

Gender and family roles once seen as central to Western civility are today questioned by those who would elevate individual freedom above family unity [1]. In general, I tend to

think that the issue regarding family harmonization is most important in globalization and modernization whatever the country. The great disruption challenges the state to manage their citizen to be good citizen. They are productive and giving contribution to society. Take more attention to immigrant family, I think that one of government task. Obviously, this does not mean native German family issue unimportant. Of course, native German family has interest to care their country. It means that they also make sure that their life rights (education, jobs) are fulfilled. Anyway, I have limitation to do research for native German family due to lack of time and funding. The next research is appropriated.

Handan Yazici explains that family problem has faced by Muslim family in Germany is different culture and foreign culture. Moreover, more than 10,000 children away from family due to domestic harassment issue. They are Muslim family but the ruler is giving them to Christian family and homosexual family. Handan Yazici is also as a family counsellor in Marburg Germany. Previously, she was a women leader of IGMG Hessen. Currently, she is a women leader of IGMG which the main office is in Kerpen. Additional information, the main office of IGMG European Union is in Köln. She describes that IGMG suggests that Muslim women should live in society with Islamic value.

TABLE III. WOMEN MEMBERSHIP OF IGMG HEADQUARTERS

Month	Year	Active Member	Exit
	2015		
January		491	9
February		53	0
	2014	2,053	36
	2013	296	8
	2012	437	15
	2011	492	28
	2010	267	32
	2009	487	20
	2008	161	12
	2007	116	12
	2006	77	12
	2005	58	7
	2004	60	4
	2003	25	1
	2002	25	9
	2001	45	7
	2000	62	14
	1999	109	26
	1998	88	10
	1997	60	3
	1996	39	6
	1995	24	4
	1994	23	13
	1993	26	15
	1992	31	19
	1991	97	69
	1990	25	12
	1989	7	82
	1988	81	44
	1969		1
Active Member		5,815	530
Passive Member		5,762	

Source: IGMG headquarter, 2015

Based on data mentioned above, the number of women recruited annually is variant, but the highest number of women who join this community is in 2014 (2,053 new members). Normally, since 2007 the number of women who join is above 100 new members. Interestingly, in January 2015, the new member active is 491 people. In the middle of February, the active member and passive member are more equal that is 5,815 and 5,762 respectively. However, the number of women who unjoin this community is 530 people.

TABLE IV. INFPAK CAMPAIGN BASED ON REGION TARGETS

No	Regions	Region Target	KT 25%	Result 19.02.2015	Target %
1	Vienna	90,000	22,500	43,160	191.8
2	Belgium	64,000	16,000	28,000	175.0
3	Canada	5,000	1,250	2,127	170.2
4	G Hessen	66,000	16,500	22,550	136.7
5	Württemberg	120,000	30,000	47,707	135.7
6	D France	60,000	15,000	19,390	129.3
7	Bremen	40,000	10,000	12,607	126.1
8	G Bavaria	90,000	22,500	25,554	113.6
9	Paris	30,000	7,500	8,200	109.3
10	R.N Saar	60,000	15,000	16,230	108.2
11	K Hessen	44,000	11,000	11,502	104.6
12	G Netherlands	90,000	22,500	22,667	100.7
13	Hannover	60,000	15,000	15,000	100.0
14	Balkans	1,000	250	250	100
15	Berlin	100,000	25,000	21,818	87.3
16	K Netherlands	80,000	20,000	16,919	84.6
17	Hamburg	70,000	17,500	14,470	82.7
18	Linz	40,000	10,000	8,032	80.3
19	Lyon	60,000	15,000	11,629	77.5
20	Northern Ruhr	50,000	12,500	9,622	77.0
21	Köln	90,000	22,500	17,000	75.6
22	Düsseldorf	110,000	27,500	18,086	65.8
23	Schwaben	40,000	10,000	5,850	58.5
24	Freiburg D	40,000	10,000	5,808	58.1
25	Ruhr A	130,000	32,500	18,250	56.2
26	Switzerland	40,000	10,000	5,567	55.7
27	Alpes	40,000	10,000	5,500	55.0
28	Swedish	10,000	2,500	1,300	52.0
29	G France	10,000	2,500	1,105	44.2
30	GBF	30,000	7,500	2,800	37.3
31	Denmark	40,000	10,000	3,046	30.5
32	Italy	5,000	1,250	315	25.2
33	Arlberg	40,000	10,000	2,000	20.0
34	England	10,000	2,500	270	10.8
35	K. Bavaria	40,000	10,000	1,000	10.0
36	Norway	5,000	1,250		0.0
37	Australia	60,000	15,000		0.0
38	Others			2,300	
	Total	1,750,000	450,000	440,631	97.9
				-9,369	

Note: 100% KT general target was on 18.02.2015. 1) 100% filling the target Vienna 24.01.2015, 2) 100% filling the target K Hessen 30.01.2015, 3) 100% filling the target G Hessen 02.02.2015, 4) 100% filling the target Hannover 02.02.2015, 5) 100% filling the target RNS 04.02.2015, 6) 100% filling the target Belgium 05.02.2015, 7) 100% filling the target Bremen 06.02.2015, 8) 100% filling the target D France 08.02.2015, 9) 100% filling the target Württemberg 11.02.2015, 10) 100% filling the target Balkans 15.02.2015, 11) 100% filling the target G Netherlands 16.02.2015, 12) 100% filling the target G Bavaria 16.02.2015, 13) 100% filling the target Paris 18.02.2015. Source: IGMG Headquarter, 2015

Based on data mentioned above, four regions have annually infpak target 100,000 Euro and more. These are Ruhr A (130,000 Euro), Baden Württemberg (120,000 Euro), Düsseldorf (110,000 Euro) and Berlin (100,000 Euro).

However, 14 regions successful collected 25% of annually *infak* target in middle of February 2015. Namely, Vienna, Belgium, Canada, G Hessen, Baden Württemberg, D France, Bremen, G Bavaria, Paris, R.N Saar, K Hessen, G Netherlands, Hannover and Balkans. It is likely Baden Württemberg as a productive and manageable region if comparable with other region where IGMG operates around the world.

The activities of IGMG are aimed at four target groups: the individual IGMG members; all Muslim living in Europe; the global *Ummah*; and the general population including various dialogue partners [15]. IGMG's headquarters has eight departments that represent the main fields of activities: Education, *Irshad* (religious guidance), General Secretariat, Finances, Organizational Department, Social Services, and the Women's and Youth departments. Various IGMG women's department provide similar services to women and girls, with a special focus on addressing the German language deficits among first-generation migrant women. A particular focus is on religious services because 'only well-founded knowledge makes a conscious religious life possible'. IGMG actively promotes the wearing of the headscarf (hijab), which is worn by most female IGMG members. 'Wearing a veil (hijab) is part of the Islamic dress code and is therefore to be adhered to. Yet wearing or not wearing a veil is not significant in terms of one's affiliation to Islam. By any means, Muslim women should wear headscarves by choice and out of their own conviction of faith. Discrimination against women who do not wear a headscarf is as unacceptable as discrimination against women who have decided for themselves to wear a veil.' Since its beginning, IGMG has also complemented the religious services offered to women with courses on everyday issues such as marriage, parenting, and health. Similar programs are now being implemented by other Islamic organizations in Germany such as DITIB.

IV. CONCLUSION

The concept of Islamic feminism which is connected with the proposal to support integration process in the European Union and in the Member States have been examined by involving theoretical considerations regarding political and legal initiatives. Precisely and systematically analyse issues which constitute the concept of Islamic feminism will be implemented based on data from an empirical research and quantitative method that respondents should fill three tasks.

Task 1 is about self-description. Task 2 is about social participation. Task 3 is about Women Leadership.

REFERENCES

- [1] R.W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton University Press, 2000.
- [2] H. Subiako, "Discourse Civil Society, State and Media Industry on Democratization of Broadcasting System in Post-New Order," *Journal of Society, Culture and Politics*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2011.
- [3] S. Chambers and J. Kopstein, *Civil Society and the State*. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*. Anne Phillips, Bonnie Honig and John S. Dryzek (Eds), Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. 371-373.
- [4] T. Aryanti, "A Claim to Space: Debating Female Religious Leadership a Muhammadiyah Mosque in Indonesia," *In The Muslim World*, vol. 103, pp. 375-388, 2013.
- [5] F. Seedat, "When Islam and Feminism Converge," *The Muslim World*, vol. 103, pp. 404-420, 2013.
- [6] Interview with Ms. Ayten Kilicarslan in DITIB, Köln on February 13th 2015.
- [7] Interview with Mrs. Aynur Handan Yazici in IGMG Kerpen on February 20th 2015.
- [8] I. Gul, "Transnational Islamic Networks," *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 92, no. 880, pp. 900-901, 2010.
- [9] H. Abdel-Samad, *Alienation and radicalization: Young Muslims in Germany*. In Gerdien Jonker, Valérie Amiraux (Eds.) *Politics of Visibility; Young Muslims in European Public Spaces*. Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2006, p. 207.
- [10] A. Black, H. Esmali and N. Hosen, *Modern Perspectives on Islamic Law*. United Kingdom: Edward Elgar, 2013.
- [11] Ö. Çaha, *Women and Civil Society in Turkey; Women's Movements in a Muslim Society*. England, Ashgate, 2013, p. 145.
- [12] T.K. Gugler, "Jihad, Da'wa, and Hijra: Islamic Missionary Movements in Europe," 2007.
- [13] A. Fuess, *Unifying Islam in Europa: A Comparison of the French and German Approaches to Their Muslim Minorities; in Islam in Europe; Case Studies, Comparisons and Overviews*. Reuven Amitai and Amikam Nachmani (Eds.). Jerusalem: European Forum at the Hebrew University Jerusalem, 2007, p. 73.
- [14] T. Sunier and N. Landman, *Transnational Turkish Islam; Shifting Geographies of Religious Activism and Community Building in Turkey and Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 31-32.
- [15] K. Rosenow-Williams, *Organizing Muslims and Integrating Islam in Germany: New Developments in the 21st Century*. Leiden. Brill, 2012, p. 186.
- [16] D. Halder and K. Jaishankar, "Religious Freedom in Modern Germany: A Review of Constitutional Provisions," *Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Tirunelveli India. ERCES Journal*, 2012.