

Minangkabau matrilineal: The correlation between the Qur'an and gender



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Upon previous research, the matrilineal system seems to oppose Islamic teaching. However, the matrilineal system practiced by the Minangkabau society in West Sumatra, Indonesia has its uniqueness. Thus, this study aims to examine the correlation between the Qur'an and gender roles within the context of Minangkabau customs, specifically focusing on the matrilineal aspect. The present study employs qualitative methods for conducting library research through critical analysis. This study discovered that the matrilineal system practiced by the Minangkabau society aligns with Qur'anic teachings that respect the position of women in Islam. In the matrilineal system of Minangkabau, women hold significant strength and play an influential role in cultural and traditional practices. The Minangkabau tribe's matrilineal system encompasses three key elements: marriage, inheritance and offspring. The marriage system is exogamous. Additionally, the practice of marriage is localised, with the husband typically residing in the wife's household. Their inheritance is divided into *pusako tinggi* [from ancestors from generation to generation] and *pusako randah* (from the efforts of married couple). Women get *pusako tinggi* as they serve as protectors and a symbol of their community. In comparison, men take the responsibility of overseeing its preservation to prevent any form of misuse. *Pusako randah* is distributed as Islamic teaching. Lineage determination is primarily based on paternal lineage, aligning with Islamic teaching. Upon comprehensive analysis, it becomes evident that there is no conflict between the matrilineal system and Islamic teachings, particularly concerning principles of gender equality. Both women and men have significant roles, as the Qur'an provides extensive explanations regarding gender equality.

Contribution: This research holds significant findings in establishing a great relation between Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an and the matrilineal principles practiced by the Minangkabau tribe.

Keywords: Islamic teaching, gender, matrilineal, Minangkabau, Qur'an.

Introduction

In the conversation on matrilineality and Islam (Kooria 2021), the initial premise is that matrilineality is incompatible with Islamic principles (Kato 1978; Wanto 2017; Merican 2022). In reality, however, it frequently aligns with Islamic teaching. By examining customs in Minangkabau West Sumatra, Indonesia,¹ we can see that the matrilineal system went through a lengthy process to maintain a matrilineal system but Islamic teachings remained a principle. Moreover, Islamic teachings stated in the Qur'an, as a guide to life, contain passages that explain gender equality that there is no distinction between men and women. Matrilineality manifests gender implementation within a community culture that continues to presume men are superior to women.

Gender refers to the qualities, roles, responsibilities, tasks, rights and behaviours natural to men and women based on their cultural development and community upbringing (Ratnasari 2019). Gender differences are natural as long as they do not result in gender inequality. Nevertheless, the reality of society demonstrates that gender disparities give rise to many types of injustice, particularly for women (Musdah Mulia 2007).

In Islam, a philosophy of human interactions is centred on equality between men and women. Women have economic rights, including the right to possess property, which their husbands or

1. The largest Muslim population that still practices matriarchy is the Minangkabau ethnic group. The family structure found in the Minangkabau civilisation is quite interesting, distinct and unique. In addition to adhering to a matriarchal social structure, the Minangkabau adheres to Islam, which is typically patriarchal. Multiple historical events have placed the Minangkabau community in a dialect between traditional family values, reformist Islamic beliefs and the concept of Islamic renewal. In light of the brutal battle that took place during the Padri war as a result of competing ideologies, the people of Minangkabau prefer the route of compromise over bloody conflict. Tuanku Imam Bonjol, a Padri war figure, attempted to replace the matriarchal system with an Islamic society based on the Quran and Sunnah. Finally, Tuanku Imam Bonjol attempted a dialogue between Minangkabau traditions and Islamic law, which became known as *adat basandi shara', shara' basandi kitab Allah*.

fathers cannot interfere with (Ch. *al-Nisa'* [4]:32). The Qur'anic view does not describe human beings or social reality based on dichotomies such as women and men, public and private, natural and cultural or political and family. The essential message of the Qur'an is the extent to which men and women obey God's orders by developing their piety, whether in the family, state, economy, or activities. Therefore, religion is the only distinction between men and women.

The Qur'an demonstrates wisdom in addressing gender issues by emphasising the principles of justice, equality and partnership. The Qur'an does not negate the existence of differences between men and women. Still, it opposes discriminatory practices that favour one gender at the expense of the other – similar to the matrilineal system practiced in the Minangkabau culture. The role of women as 'Bundo Kanduang' exemplifies the presence of gender equality within the Minangkabau community and is highly aligned with Islamic principles.

This study examines the relationship between the Qur'an, matrilineal inheritance and gender. The authors conduct library research, a form of qualitative research, to achieve comprehensive results. The research phase consists of gathering both primary and secondary data. The primary data are the Qur'an and the matrilineal system practice of Minangkabau, and secondary data include relevant literature such as books and article journals. This study also employs *tafsir* and anthropological methods. While descriptively analysing the data through data reduction, data presentation, interpreting data and making conclusion.

Results and discussion

Understanding matrilineality as a kinship system in Minangkabau, West Sumatera, Indonesia

West Sumatra in Indonesia, popularly known as Minangkabau, is one of the regions that follows the matrilineal system (Sastra 2018). West Sumatra is one of Indonesia's provinces surrounded by three mountains: Mount Merapi, Mount Singgalang and Mount Sago. The religious observance of the inhabitants of West Sumatra has gained the region 'Adat Basandi Shara', Shara' Basandi Kitab Allah' label (Firdaus 2019). In addition to its reputation for religious observance, the matrilineal (mother's lineage) is distinctive among the Minangkabau ethnicity. There are four distinguishing features of the matrilineal system in West Sumatra:²

2. See Kato (2020:38). Zurinal Z. also wrote that the main characteristic of the kinship system is that houses, land or all items belonging to the heirloom property are collective property, which cannot be traded or mortgaged because it is worked on and owned by women and their children. Settlement patterns are *uxosarilokal* [matrilocal residence], where a man lives with his wife's family. A communal house consists of several female relatives with their respective husbands and children. A senior woman heads such a house called a *niniek*, or grandmother. The man who lives in his wife's communal house is called *urang sumando*, which means that he is an honoured guest in his wife's family and therefore has the right to be respected and served by her family members. Because of his position as a *sumando*, the married man remains a member of his matrilineal family in the position of *Mamak*, *Mamak Rumah* or *Mamak pusako*. The position of *Mamak Rumah* means that she is the leader of her sisters or children, who are called *kemenakan*. In her role as *Mamak Rumah*, she is the leader and supervisor of numerous sisters and their children residing in *Rumah Gadang*. As the supervisor of multiple *saparuik* households, her duty as *Mamak Pusako* entails this. One could also say that the *Mamak Pusako* has a higher position than the *Mamak Rumah* and that the position of *Mamak Rumah* is higher than the *Mamak*. See Zurinal (2001:87–88).

- The maternal line organises descent and the formation of ethnic lines (Stark 2013).
- *Payuang* is a group of descendants united under a *penghulu*, a male leader appointed through a specific ceremony.
- The residence pattern is matrilineal (at the wife's place) or, more appropriately, *dwi-local* (at both wife's and parents' place of husband).³
- In the *payuang* or *paruik*, the *Mamak* (mother's brothers) holds power, not the father (Kato 2020:38).

The role of women holds a crucial position within the matrilineal kinship system of the Minangkabau culture, as the continuity of lineage and familial unity is primarily established through the maternal line. In terms of inheritance distribution, there are two categories: *pusako tinggi* [high inheritance] and *pusako rendah* [low inheritance]. *Pusako tinggi* refers to inheritances passed down from generation to generation from *mamak* to their nieces (the children of sisters). Meanwhile, *pusako rendah* refers to inheritances passed down through grants or inherited from parents to their children; it is divided due to Islamic law. Women can effectively fulfil their responsibilities in managing *pusaka tinggi* for their future prosperity. In decision-making, the role of women is crucial as they often establish the feasibility of an activity. Their involvement is essential, and it cannot proceed without their participation. For instance, in the event of property acquisition, by a pawnbroker, women are involved in the process (Susanto 2018:147–170).

Gender perspectives on Matrilineal

Matrilineality is a relatively rare social structure in contemporary populations. Matrilineal systems are present in various cultural contexts within different societal systems worldwide (Fatimah 2012). The Minangkabau society is one of the largest matrilineal societies worldwide (Evers & Korff 2000; Malik 2016). The Minangkabau culture possesses values that have the potential to promote gender equality. *Bundo Kanduang*, female leader figure, has the significant role in Minangkabau customs. The involvement of *Bundo Kanduang* in *musyawarah mufakaik* [decision making] exemplifies the equitable representation of genders within the matrilineal system, as evidenced by the significant women's ownership of cultural inheritance (Nasir & Halim 2022).

The primary attributes associated with the matrilineal system are: (1) The lineage is matrilineally inherited; (2) The identification of tribal affiliation based on the maternal lineage; (3) Exogamous marriage means that marriage within one's tribe or social group is prohibited; (4) The concept of revenge (?) is perceived as a collective duty within the tribe, with no further practice in its development; (5) Theoretically, the locus of power within the tribe is vested in the maternal figures. However, empirical observations indicate that this system is seldom realised in practical circumstances; (6) The brother retained his position as supervisor in a matrilineal

3. When a Minang man marries, he moves to his wife's home or a nearby location and stays the night there.

marriage, wherein the husband assumes the role of visiting the wife's domicile; (7) The transmission of inheritance rights to women was determined by maternal lineage. In this case, it pertains to transmitting *pusako randah* (Fatimah 2012).

In the matrilineal kinship system, men are equally significant as women in familial and customary issues. The men play the role of a paternal figure to his children, takes on the responsibility of caring for his siblings' nephews, fulfills the duties of a husband and family leader and serves as the supervisor, protector and guardian of his sister's assets. In addition to their familial responsibilities, men also play significant roles in society, such as serving as *alim ulama*, and *penghulu*, and demonstrating intelligence and resourcefulness. It is expected that men fulfil the role of leaders and serve as role models in their daily lives, demonstrating attitudes and behaviors that align with the teachings of Islam.

Types of gender representation

There are two types of gender representation in Minangkabau culture: 'matrifocal' and 'androcentric'. In matrifocal representations, such as those seen in the popular folktales *Rantjak di Labuah* and *Kaba Cindua Mato* [the story of *Cindur Mata*], female characters possess power and authority. These androcentric depictions include the matrilineal genesis tale from Minangkabau. The androcentric depictions 'laud masculine players who emerge in certain historical, political, and religious settings', indicating historical alterations in the meaning of gender (Blackwood 2001).

In the context of the matrilineal system, women are responsible for fulfilling dual roles, encompassing both domestic and public spheres. The domestic role is significant in the household, encompassing responsibilities such as nurturing and caring for children, supporting and fulfilling a spouse's needs and supporting siblings. Meanwhile, the public role involves actively contributing to the family's financial well-being.⁴

Islam, Quran and gender

Gender issues are cultural concerns, the scope of which refers to the societal classification of men and women as masculine and feminine, which varies according to time and location. Gender refers to the socially prescribed roles of men and women. Differences in obligations can be observed across different cultures and intercultural contexts, as well as over time. In contrast, genetic and physical traits determine biological sex identity (Istibsyaroh 2004:59).

Gender orientation explains how men and women contribute to cultural issues and daily life, resulting in being male or female (Wilson 1989:2). Existing social institutions, such as the division of labour among men and women, can result in disadvantages for women. A common belief is that women

4.It demonstrates that women not only manage household responsibilities but also contribute to the family finances, despite it is not an obligation.

must take care of and handle household chores, even if it means working outside the home. In all societies, the roles of men and women differ according to community, status and power. The distinct growth of gender roles in society is because of various variables, ranging from the natural environment to myths and legends used to justify sex differences.⁵ It is consistent with the traditional and conservative notion that women are expected to care for the home, educate children and serve their husbands. As this is the domain of males, women cannot interact in society or work outside the house.

Muslims are reluctant to criticise traditional *tafsir* because of its powerful hold on the mind. Muslims believe classical *tafsir* to be a vital part of the process that established tradition and then connected it to the history of revelation and religious texts. Classical *tafsir* for Muslims is, therefore, not just a commentary on the Qur'an but also a historical record of the conditions in which communities of believers and states claim to have legal authority over the interpretation of the Qur'an (Barlas 2005:102). In addition, the interpretation of religious teachings plays a crucial part in legitimising the dominance of men over women, with the outcomes being heavily impacted by the *mufassir's* lenses, which are frequently tied to economic, political, cultural and ideological factors (Fakih 1996:54).

The exciting aspect of this system is that women have always been seen as 'the second sex' at all levels of society. The Code of Hammurabi restricts women's rights and grants benefits to men, such as the father or husband in a household having the prime role and unrestricted power. For instance, the father's permission was required for a marriage to be lawful (Umar 2003:91). In the family, men's rights take precedence over women's rights. In Arab culture, for instance, the notion that men are superior to women persists. Women are unable to travel freely outside the household. Especially in the public domain, women do not enjoy the same rights as men. Women are prohibited from having Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) cards (Azra 2014). In many Muslim-majority nations, gender equality is a passionately discussed subject. In Morocco, prominent publications and television or radio stations discuss women's rights (Bouhout 2020; Jambers 2020; Eddouada 2021). Women's rights are sometimes regarded as a victory of Western secular civilisations (Gray 2014).

The verses related to gender in the Qur'an allow human intelligence to arrange the distribution of duties between men and women with mutual benefit in mind. The Qur'an does not dispute the presence of biological and anatomical distinctions, but these differences are not utilised to justify the preferential treatment of one gender over another. The basic of the connection between men and women is grace-filled tranquillity (Umar 2010:305). The gender-related verses of the Qur'an have offered general instruction on establishing harmonious individual and community characteristics. The

5.Istibsyaroh (2004:65), excerpted from Mosse (1996:5).

Qur'an suggests that the gender load is not absolute but instead designed to facilitate attaining worldly and eschatological life goals.

The fact that some people are more advanced than others is not God's gift but rather the result of their decisions. Therefore, humans' good and poor luck is unrelated to gender factors. The following factors can be used as criteria for assessing the Quran's gender equality principles (Umar 2003:247):

- both men and women work as servants. In their status as servants, men and women have equal standing in Allah's eyes; the only difference is their level of piety (Ch. al-Hujurat [49]:13).
- men and women are caliphs in the world. Allah Almighty created humans on Earth to serve as caliphs and servants. There is no dichotomy between men and women; they have the same function on Earth (Ch. al-An'am [6]:165).
- men and women receive an old arrangement. Before life, every people bears a divine mandate and a primal covenant. Everyone born on Earth acknowledges God's existence. Angels are witnesses to the commitment, and (Ch. Az Zariyat [51]:56).
- both men and women have equal potential for achievement. Men and women are not different in pursuing the highest level of accomplishment (Ch. Ali 'Imran [3]:195). This verse refers to an ideal form of gender equality for women.

However, the reality of social life has not yet been completely understood. It was because patriarchal culture and customs were still prevalent in Arab society. However, the concept of equality and equal rights described in the Qur'an has been faced with opposition from the community, particularly men (Irsyadunnas 2013:195). Men are assigned significant positions in the public sphere, while women are assigned roles in the private sphere, according to the current understanding of gender verses. The gender-based division of labour disadvantages women and helps males. This separation is contrary to the spirit of the Qur'an.

Gender and its Quranic verses (matrilineal engagement)

Islam consistently seeks to maintain a state of balance in all matters. Islam recognises men and women as individuals with a balanced and equal position. Nevertheless, there remains a perspective that differentiates the roles and positions of men and women. Gender is a social construct encompassing societal norms regarding the behaviours and thoughts deemed appropriate for people identifying as either women or men. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, there is no recognition of any distinction between individuals based on their gender. The differentiation between men and women is solely based on biological factors.

Allah has decided that he created humans in pairs with essential differences, yet they need one (Ch. al-Rum [30]:21; Ch. Adz-Dzariyat [51]:49). Existing differences should contribute to a more meaningful existence. One of the Qur'anic concepts

of gender equality is its definition of moral agency and practice, particularly its teaching that both men and women possess the same ability for action, choice and moral individuality (Barlas 2003:250). The Quran shows it, which holds men and women to the same standard. In other words, the Qur'an does not assign moral responsibility based on gender.

Historically, men dominated the interpretation of Islam, although women also played important roles. *Sayyidah* Khadijah, the Prophet's first wife, has an important role in supporting the Prophet's da'wah. The male centre has marginalised women in understanding Islam, especially in interpreting the Quran and the law, and in leadership positions in public sphere (DeLong-Bas 2010). Historically, the Prophet was sent to enhance women's status. Women were generally considered dynamic, pleasant, and well-mannered throughout the Prophet's lifetime. In the Qur'an, the ideal representation of a *muslimah* is a person who is independent in several spheres of life (Musdah Mulia 2007:61). It is not unexpected to find many illustrious people during the Prophet's time who achieved great things as both men and women. *Sayyidah* 'Aisha was the wife of the Prophet. She was important in disseminating the Prophet's traditions, particularly about women. Aisha was also known as the Prophet's wife, and the Prophet's elder colleagues often asked for her advice and guidance (Stowasser 1994:305).

The genesis and attributes of human creation are among the topics related to gender. The Qur'an states that despite biological differences, human beings are ontologically, ethically and morally equal, meaning that men and women have the exact origin and qualities and are compatible spouses.⁶ Regarding this topic, the explanation of *Tafsir* is divided into two categories. First, it is stated that Hawa is created from part of Adam's rib. These exegesis books are *Tafsir Jami'ul Ahkam* (Al-Qurthubi 2003:448), and *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (Al-Damasyqi 1306:159). Second, it is stated that Hawa is created as same as Adam. Those exegesis books are *Tafsir Al-Maraghi* (Al-Maraghi 1969:177) and *Tafsir Al-Manar* (Rida 1973:330).

From the viewpoint that the *nafs* is Adam, it is also recognised that the term *zaujaha*, which means 'partner', refers to Adam's wife, Eve (Shihab 1996:300). They hold this belief because of the hadith, which states that Eve was created from Adam's rib. The fact that Eve was created from Adam's rib, which is positioned near the heart, demonstrates that the position of women is close to every man's heart so that they can treat them properly (Shihab 2002b:315).

The differences in interpretation among *mufassir* have a significant effect on society. The idea that the woman (Adam's wife) was Adam's creation puts women in a negative light. This perspective argues that the relationship between men and women is interdependent. Without men, women cannot exist, and vice versa. Even if the majority of *mufassir* agree that

6.O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) he created his wife (Hawwa [Eve]), and from them both he created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you (Ch. al-Nisa' [4]:1).

women were created from the left rib of men, it is possible that the idea that women were produced from Adam's rib is fiction and that they were created from the same species as Adam.

The varying interpretations of *mufassir* regarding the origins of women primarily stem from divergent perspectives on comprehending the sacred text of the Qur'an and the societal structure that shapes textual interpretation. Diverse perspectives in interpreting the Qur'an can arise from variations in the scientific background and social context of the *mufassir*.

The relations of matrilineality, Quran and gender

Most people currently live under a patriarchal system that puts authority in the hands of males and gives fathers control over inherited relationships. According to archaeological evidence and historical oral traditions, in which many cultures adopted a matriarchal structure, this is the reality. There are just a few matrilineal systems worldwide, and the phenomenon of harmony between matrilineal systems and Islam is intriguing. It may be because Islamic doctrine and matrilineal ideology are incompatible (Dube 1975). Despite the importance of following Islamic teaching, the Minangkabau people prefer to keep their social and cultural ties.

In West Sumatra, particularly in Minangkabau, people have maintained their social and cultural ties, including their matrilineal system. In addition, the island of Lakshadweep in India practices Islam and the matrilineal system (Kooria 2021). So do the island of Ngazidja (Blanchy 2019) and Rahba tribe (Chowdhury 2021) in India. The regulation of property rights was governed by matrilineal customary law. Sharia, particularly the Shafi'i school, has marriage and divorce regulations. Sharia also offers direction on other aspects of life, including birth, circumcision and death (Darzi, Ahmadvand & Nushi 2021). In this setting, Islam has evolved and adapted to local traditions, familial patterns, legal systems and political and economic institutions with considerable adaptability because it has been widely dispersed and has experienced cultural variety (Dube 1995).

In a matrilineal family system, a person's lineage is traced through her mother's or woman's children (Zurinal 2001:87). Matrilineal systems provide authority to women. Women are not treated with disrespect. Matrilineality is one of the cultural traits seen in some regions of the world (Evers & Korff 2000; Muhajir, Latief & Tiara 2020). The matrilineal system places a great value on women. In the matrilineal system, the bonds between women are stronger than those between men. The matrilineal structure has an essential function in the formation of social bonds (Petersen 1982). Matrilineal inheritance is thus possibly one of the expressions of women's gender equality. Matrilineality and Islam, as revealed by the Qur'an and hadith, are mutually exclusive and subject to conversion. Although matrilineality may persist as a viable part of social society, patrilineality is more common in Islam (Bonate 2006).

Inheritance is one of the concerns associated with matrilineality and gender. The topic of inheritance is often misunderstood.

The unequal ratio of one man's portion to half a woman's part is questioned by many. Some *mufassir* do not explain the whole of the Qur'anic inheritance concept. It reveals that the Qur'an does not treat men and women equally regarding inheritance. In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, however, it is taught that the distribution of inheritance is based on necessities. Taking into account the woman's requirements halves the man's part. Men have a more significant need for property than women because of their need to care for their families (Shihab 2002a:353).

Following the traditional system of inheritance law, the uncle's inheritance must be distributed to the nephews, whether or not it is in the form of property. In addition to his wife, mother, grandmother, brothers and uncles, according to Islamic *faraidh* [inheritance] law, a man's inheritance (as a father) must be handed to his children. Regarding who receives what, customary law and Islamic law seem to be in conflict. The customary law requirements for the inheritance of a man who dies, while he is *Mamak* or *penghulu* of his tribe involve '*pusako tinggi*', which is the common property of his tribe that he received from his ancestors and whose authority is customarily vested in the *Mamak*. In the Minangkabau tribe, the brothers or nieces are responsible for administration. It is known as a matrilineal relationship. Following Islamic law, a man's (as a father's) inheritance must be handed down to his children and others; It is '*pusako randah*', that is, property that is its means of subsistence, not tribal property (Kamal 2000:99–100).

In the distribution of inheritance in Islam related to the *ashabah*, women get one-half of men's share (Ch. al-Nisa' [4]:11), although in other situations, they are treated equally (Ch. al-Nisa' [4]:12). In some cases, Islam specifies that males get half the portion of women, but in others, the share is the same (Asa 2005:145). In this topic, adherents of the social science of conflict use gender as an analytical tool to analyse structural and systemic gender-based inequalities. According to Oakley in *Sex, Gender and Society*, gender is a distinction that is neither biological nor God-given (Oakley 2016). Biological differences are God-given sex distinctions, and hence they are permanent. Gender is described as behavioural distinctions between men and women which are socially constructed, that is, characteristics that are not of nature or produced by God but are instead developed by men and women via a lengthy social and cultural process.

In verse 13th of chapter al-Hujurat, men and women are seen as having equal status; the distinction between them is dedication and piety. Matrilineal represents the realisation of gender equality. The matrilineal organisation is a terrific method to create relationships and is resilient when times are rough (Petersen 1982:129–144). Given industrialisation and societal development, the system remains feasible in current circumstances (Flinn 1986). The phrase '*bundo kanduang*' for women in Minangkabau is one example of the present relevance of matrilineal culture to gender.

The division of inheritance described in the Qur'an, in which women get half of what males receive, cannot be used to justify gender inequality. Matrilineal inheritance is accepted

as it is proportional to the degree of need, especially that of the male head responsible for providing for his family members.

The Qur'an contains many verses emphasising the equality of men and women, highlighting the high regard for women in Islamic teachings. In Islam, a mother holds a cherished position, as stated in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Hence, the matrilineal system observed in the Minangkabau community of West Sumatra does not contradict the teachings of the Qur'an.

While lineage is traditionally traced through the maternal line, it is worth observing that in naming a child, both the son's and daughter's names are commonly associated with the father's name as Fulanah bint Fulan and Fulan bin Fulan. It is not 'Fulanah bint Fulanah' for a female and 'Fulan bin Fulanah' for a male.

Conclusion

Islam prohibits gender inequality. The Qur'anic interpretation proves that Allah Almighty does not consider a people's gender, money or other factors but their devotion to Him. The Quran has principles encouraging gender equality, including matrilineal ideology. In addition to playing a significant role in building social relationships in society, matrilineality also affects the quality of women's lives both in terms of family and culture. The Minangkabau community follows the matrilineal system with the aim of lifting the status of women and effectively managing the inheritance of *pusako tinggi* to ensure a smooth livelihood of the family. In the same time, *pusako randah* is divided according to Islamic law, which is 2:1 for men and women. The men also play an important role in both his family as family leader, supervisor, father and husband; and brother's family as the guard of his nephew and his brother's wealth. In addition to their family duties, men serve as *alim ulama*, *penghulu* and intelligent and resourceful in society. Men are obliged to lead and model Islamic behaviour in their daily lives.

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