
Gender Dynamics in The Land of Minahasa: From Traditional Culture to Modern Context

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Abstract

There are many articles about gender in the land of Minahasa. Still, no one has specifically discussed gender dynamics in the land of Minahasa: From Traditional Culture to The Modern Context. The problem is the reality of community life now presents the fact that the egalitarian society of Minahasa has changed. The egalitarian roles and positions constructed in the land of Minahasa from the beginning no longer take place. This study aims to trace how gender dynamics in Minahasa land have evolved over time, focusing on the changing gender roles from traditional culture to the modern context. By combining social-cultural analysis with a gender approach as well as methodological work based on a qualitative methods approach, this study seeks to answer the question: how do social changes affect gender roles and status in present-day Minahasa land, as well as how present-day Minahasa society responds to the dynamics of such changes.

Keywords: *Gender Dynamics, Minahasa Land Today, Traditional Culture, Modern Context.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Minahasa land, the location that the author uses, points to part of the province of North Sulawesi (now), namely the city of Manado, Bitung City, South Minahasa Regency, Minahasa Regency, Minahasa Southeast Minahasa Regency, Tomohon City. These areas are the cultural areas of early Minahasa. The Minahasa Land has a cultural narrative and social history that clearly explains that egalitarian societal relations lead to the inevitability of women as leaders. The mythological narrative of the primary Minahasa ancestors about the three principal ancestors, namely Karema (the first female priest), Lumimuut (female ancestor), and Toar (male ancestor), emphasizes that since the beginning, essential roles in society and religion have been carried out together by women and men. This joint role also strongly emphasizes that in Minahasa land, gender equality has been constructed from the beginning. Women become ritual leaders and community leaders when opening new lands in society.

The egalitarian socio-religious roles above have been maintained from generation to generation in Minahasa land. Therefore, in traditional Minahasa society, female leaders (as Tonaas) and religious leaders (local religious priests) lead with male leaders. More interestingly, in the South Minahasa area (one of the old Minahasa areas that was initially called Tontemboan), religious leaders are dominated by female priests.

The change in egalitarian leadership occurred when the Dutch colonialists came to Minahasa land and negated female leadership, then upheld male leadership as the main one. Women in Minahasa land experienced the domestication of roles. They were trained to embroider, clean the house, and cook, and taught that housework is their job. On the other hand, men were constructed as workers on the farm, village leaders, and other public jobs formed by the colonial government. This reality is parallel to the theory of hegemonic masculinity from RW Connell. Connell explains that power, control, and assertiveness, markers of leadership eligibility, are often idealized as only possessed by men and not by women (Connell, 1995:76). Connell further explains that such masculinity dominates women and contributes to a hierarchical gender structure. Referring to this theory, it can be asserted that the changes in the Minahasa land were caused by ideas, concepts, and paradigms of thinking and acting from the colonial government, which was based on patriarchal views (masculinity), which legalized the domination and co-optation of women.

Changes in society in the Minahasa land became increasingly solid due to the significant contributions made by missionaries. Mainstream religions came at different times. The missionaries of these religions came from European, Arab, Indian, and Chinese communities that had hierarchical and patriarchal cultures. Such social culture was socialized in the Minahasa land along with religious teachings in the form of gender-biased interpretations of Religious Books and ignored women's experiences as necessary. One theologian who saw the tendency of gender-biased interpretations of religious books was Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza in her writing entitled *In Memory of Her*. Fiorenza paid particular attention to and criticized the interpretation of the Bible, which, according to her study, ignored or underestimated the role of women in sacred texts and church history. For Fiorenza, such an interpretation of the Bible further strengthens the oppression and discriminatory treatment of women (Fiorenza, 1984:15).

The perspective and attitude towards women that are reinforced by the interpretation of the Religious Book that is gender biased in the development of the Minahasa land also gives rise to problems that occur not only in the religious sphere but also in the family and society. The Minahasa land is a society with more church denominations than other religions. Christian adherents are more dominant than adherents of other religions. Therefore, the church's perspective will influence society in the Minahasa land. A concrete example is the certainty of society in the Minahasa land to perpetuate gender stereotypes that "emphasize" society to comply with gender-discriminatory roles; work as a housewife is a mandatory job for all women, women with dual roles (because they work in the public sector and are also obliged to do housework), submit to their husbands and serve all their husbands' needs, as a concrete form of loyalty and submission to their husbands as loyalty and submission to God.

The above changes, however, were not always without resistance. The critical stance of women in Minahasa land to point out clearly the acts of discrimination they experience, being a bold choice taken. Those critical Minahasa women built networks, involving everyone committed to justice and equality of life. They networked with concerned community leaders, progressive-minded religious leaders, women activists, and also with competent government agencies. This network then facilitates these women with empowerment activities, especially to make them economically independent. Because basically, the hegemony and acts of discrimination that women experience in the family are largely due to women's economic dependence on husbands.

In this writing, I would like to describe the fact of the experience of accompaniment to one of the victims of domestic violence that I have done as a woman activist. The woman I accompanied was a housewife (without public sector employment) who repeatedly experienced Domestic Violence. She cannot defend herself, cannot negotiate with her husband for to feel safe in home, because she is economically dependent on him. Her husband once "punished" her by not giving money for one month. Her husband does not care how she and their children would survive. Even worse, her husband bravely left them and lived with another woman. This woman then tries to satisfy her living needs by working as a laundrywoman in the homes of her friends and close family. The physical and non-physical violence he experienced repeatedly, then pushed him to decide to fight for himself and his children who also suffered the consequences of their father's actions.

Such gender dynamics in Minahasa land, challenge academic studies that can explore the issues of gender bias in Minahasa land. The purpose of such studies, mainly to educate the public, that Minahasan reality now, is not okay. Education that aims to build awareness to critically ask, whether the spirit of egalitarianism of Minahasa land is still rooted or has become cultural nostalgia?

Furthermore, to fulfill the element of research novelty, it is essential to state previous studies on gender or gender dynamics in Minahasa. There are three studies that I found that are oriented towards the application of gender in Minahasa. First, research from Gratia Fernita Waleleng, *The Role of the Evangelical Christian Church in Minahasa (GMIM) as a Social Catalyst in Promoting Sustainable Development Goals Through Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. This study concludes that GMIM, as a church rooted in most of the population in Minahasa, does not only carry out normative worship activities. GMIM has also made efforts with its programs to educate the congregation about gender equality. Second, Elizabeth Arshely Wagey et al. wrote on *Gender in the Hand Line Fishing Business Value Chain in Ongkaw Village, Sinonsyang District, South Minahasa Regency*. This study analyzes the contribution of coastal women's businesses to the household income of hand-line fishermen in Tateli Weru Village, Mandolang District, Minahasa Regency. This study concluded that there was a contribution of 52.85% of the wives of handline fishermen to family income in the form of contributions from their work as sellers of yellow rice, petibo, sellers of pop Ice/cendol/es cukur, cake sellers, fresh fish sellers, and fried food stall businesses. This study strongly points to the gender division applied to the work of male fishermen and their wives. In short, handline fishing is only done by male fishermen, while the fishermen's wives do other jobs that make money. Then this study also found that even though women work, they still bear the responsibility for housework, which they or their replacements (reliable daughters, sisters, or female parents) bear. Third, research from Biondi F Titolung et al. on *the Role of Gender in the Copra Making Process in Lolah Tiga Village, East Tombariri District, Minahasa Regency*. The focus of this study looked at the role of gender in copra-making in Lola Village. This study found that gender roles focus more on the division of labor based on gender. The copra farmer is the husband, while the wife does work that is not directly related to copra processing. If she is involved in copra processing, it is only seen as an effort to help lighten the husband's work. Meanwhile, what is understood as the primary job of the wife of a copra processing farmer is preparing food and taking care of household needs). Furthermore, in the final stage of copra processing, lifting, and selling copra, women are no longer involved because gender differences that refer to physical differences between men and women require such work to be carried out. Then, related to the results of the work carried out by copra processing farmers (husbands) and wives (with household chores, helping to process copra), men's income is more significant than women's.

After verifying previous studies, the study of Gender Dynamics in Minahasa land, From traditional culture to the modern context, has never been conducted. In addition, the qualitative approach, combined with a social-cultural approach and a gender approach, used in this study has never been used in several previous studies. Furthermore, the study of this topic will start with an explanation of how gender is in the traditional culture of Minahasa land and the modern context. Cultural narratives that describe the understanding that exists in traditional Minahasa society about the roles of women and men in the public sector, relations between women and men, and ancient philosophies that are the basis for attitudes and relations between men and women in the context of Traditional Minahasa, will be the discussion of this article. Furthermore, this article will explain the changes and problems related to gender in Minahasa today. The facts and data presented in this article aim to strongly describe gender dynamics in Minahasa today: from traditional culture to the current context. Thus, it is hoped that the Minahasa community understands what is happening and is educated to reclaim constructive values for a life together that is equal and equitable.

METHODS

The research approach in this article uses a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach refers to explaining Anselm Strauss & Juliet Corbin, namely data from various sources. The data were obtained through interviews, observations, documents, recordings, and films. Another component is the researcher's flexibility in interpreting and organizing data (Straus & Corbin, 1998: 9). Specifically, in this study, the researcher used data from observations and studies of the researcher's experience as a female activist. The researcher chose such data sources because the target of this study was to record how gender dynamics occurred in Minahasa and how people directly involved with gender issues responded to these gender dynamics. The social-cultural research approach combined with the gender approach is intended to be a sharp analytical tool for dissecting gender dynamics in Minahasa due to the changes that have occurred. Therefore, this approach will use gender analysis that focuses on structural and systemic injustice that gives rise to many problems, hinders the role of women, and ignores women's experiences (Acker, 1990: 146; Fiorenza, 1983: 15). Meanwhile, I use socio-cultural studies to study the social structure and system which then influences and changes the constructive and egalitarian cultural values held by the people in Minahasa. This approach refers to Anthony Giddens' theory of socio-cultural analysis, which involves understanding the interactions of individuals and groups within social structures and how these structures change over time (Giddens, 1984: 25). In addition, the socio-cultural analysis that I use in this paper also refers to the cultural interpretation approach used by Geertz. This analysis considers all meaningful things in society's culture (Geertz, 1973: 14).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Definition: Gender refers to roles, behaviors, and attributes that are socially constructed and imposed on men and women. Gender is then used to label identities and roles considered appropriate for women and men. Therefore, gender is also used to determine which work areas are for men and women. Based on such social construction, gender allows roles in the family, society, and religion to be determined based on gender. (Fakih, 2008: 8) Therefore, in society, we find certain positions labeled as suitable for women, while other positions are only suitable for men.

The social construction of gender is well-socialized, starting from the family. Women have been educated since childhood to act gently, to be able to cry, and always to be helped, while boys must be strong, not allowed to cry and to be independent. If there is a boy who behaves gently, cries easily, and is not independent, he is labeled as transgender or not manly enough. Likewise, girls who behave firmly, strongly, and independently and do not cry easily will be labeled tomboys or behave like men. This construction is done through parental teaching and in the toys and game models children play. Girls are accustomed to playing with dolls, cooking, and playing house, while boys are required to play with toys that are only allowed to be played by boys, such as toy cars, toy airplanes, playing tag, and soccer. Even worse, toys and toy models are often emphasized as a nature inherent in women and men that cannot be exchanged. In the relationship between adult men and women, household tasks, such as cooking, washing clothes, and managing all household needs, including serving the husband (if married), are also emphasized as the nature inherent in women. The nature of women is only to conceive, give birth, and breastfeed, as the meaning of nature is a gift from God that is inherent in women (although whether or not to do this nature is also a free choice for women). Such gender constructions give rise to gender inequalities, gender differences, and gender-related violence. Gender stereotypes are also a common problem for women in all walks of life, both in the family and in society.

Gender dynamics are how gender roles, expectations, and identities change and develop. Gender dynamics can refer to positive changes that empower women and men. On the other hand, gender dynamics can also refer to changes that discriminate against and discredit the position and role of women in society. This usually happens when old positive values are replaced by new values that use men's standards and perspectives and ignore women.

2. Minahasa Traditional Culture and Gender Roles

The Minahasa Mythology narrative describes three primary ancestors: Karema, Lumimuut, and Toar. Karema is depicted as an older woman who acts as the first priest. Karema is also depicted as a source of wisdom facilitating human relations and the Holy One. Karema is also the one who married Lumimuut and Toar after they met after the flash flood was over (the oldest version of the mythology that is still preserved among Minahasa cultural practitioners). Lumimuut is depicted as a young woman who never became old, becoming the female ancestor of the Minahasa people. Toar is depicted as a strong and mighty young man; therefore, he is often symbolized as a pillar supporting the house.

In Minahasa mythology, these three main characters play their respective roles and functions without being determined by gender. Karema, the older woman, becomes a religious and social leader in the traditional Minahasa land, while Lumimuut and Toar become leaders of the taranak (their descendant group) after further development. The depiction of male-female leadership that began in the Karema, Lumimuut, and Toar periods became a leadership model in the Minahasa land after the number of taranak groups grew. Women and men became local leaders either as priest, teterusan (leader of new land clearing) or group leaders. In southern Minahasa (also called The Tontemboan taranak group), women dominated the priest and teterusan roles. In contrast, in other Minahasa areas, women and men were equally essential in social and religious positions at that time. This means that in the context of traditional Minahasa, the role of women and men in the public sector is inevitable. A strong indication is shown by the mythological narrative about the three primary Minahasa ancestors above. Logically, if the mythology is written like that, society at that time was accustomed to equal and functional leadership of women and men. Therefore, traditional Minahasa culture is an egalitarian culture that provides equal space for men and women to be involved and play an equally important role. This egalitarian culture developed until the Minahasan people met with later immigrants, including immigrants from countries with patriarchal cultures.

3. Gender Transformation (in Minahasa) in the Modern Era

In the modern era, Minahasa society, which has various relations and encounters with various people from various ethnic and national backgrounds, faces unavoidable constructive and destructive influences. In Minahasa, the egalitarian culture of Minahasa began to shift due to encounters with European immigrants, who came to conquer the people in Minahasa. The conquest effort was marked by a change in the collective and egalitarian social leadership system to hierarchy and patriarchy. Conquest also occurred to the belief system and socio-cultural system in early Minahasa. The colonialists replaced the leadership of Ukung (community leaders) and Tonaas (religious leaders), determined by the community based on socio-cultural capacity, with leadership that was a product of the colonial government's determination. The colonialists also shifted and reduced most cultural female leaders to wives and mothers who worked at home because women were considered not to have the capacity to be leaders.

In the history of the Minahasa land, the Dutch colonial did provide opportunities for women (but in the minority) to enjoy education outside the Minahasa land, so several great women later played a role in society. The problem is that the opportunities for a handful of women did not eliminate the reduction in women's roles for most women in the Minahasa land.

The changes above continue to occur in society in the Minahasa land, marked by the increasingly displaced of egalitarian, traditional culture. The Minahasa land community is constructed with new values from these changes, and over time, it believes that patriarchal culture is Minahasan culture. In the modern context, patriarchal culture is getting more substantial and more massive, as depicted in gender relations based on the unequal distribution of power between men and women.

An anthropologist, Gayle Rubin, assesses that gender relations based on unequal power distribution are deliberately perpetuated to maintain male dominance (Rubin, 1975:178). The impact is that women are often treated as mere objects, and not a few of them experience physical and non-physical violence at home and in society. Data from the PPA Symphony of the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service (DP3A) of Sulawesi Province, uploaded in 2023, shows 1148 violence cases against women. This data is

higher than the upload of the PPA Symphony of the DP3A of North Sulawesi Province dated 2022, which amounted to 885 cases. Although these data do not show a significant increase, they confirm that every day, there is an increase in cases and victims of physical and non-physical violence against women in the province of North Sulawesi (including the Minahasa region).

The significant question behind the reality of injustice and inequality towards women is what is the attitude of religions? Many studies have been conducted worldwide—including in Minahasa—showing that religions still find it difficult to declare their responses. Many problems of injustice and inequality that lead to acts of violence against women in the family and society are only resolved through normative means, namely only praying without any assistance for healing and stopping the source of the violence. Worse still, religious actions that are not gender-responsive lead to interpretations of Religious Scriptures that tend to legitimize and become a strong reason for the continuation of injustice and inequality against women.

A feminist theologian, Rosemary Radford, explains that gender-unresponsive attitudes can be read through church teachings that often use Bible verses to justify the unconditional submission of women to men (in marriage). One example is Ephesians 5: 22-24:

Wives submit to their husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, as the church submits to Christ, let wives submit everything to their husbands.

Ruether explains that these verses are applied without considering the historical and social context that influences the text of the scriptures. Therefore, Ruether asserts that the Bible cannot be read as an inherently patriarchal text but must be understood in the paradigm of liberation that opposes all forms of oppression, including gender oppression (Ruether, 1983: 97).

Feminist theologian Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza also criticized something similar in her writing entitled *In Memory of Her*. One of the Bible verses that he says is often used to justify acts of oppression against women is Genesis 3:16: "He said to the woman, I will greatly multiply your pain in pregnancy; in pain, you will give birth to children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." This verse is often used when resolving the problem of violence against women and accepting the treatment she experienced as a consequence of God's word about submission to her husband. According to Fiorenza, this is one example of the legitimacy of religion (the church), which justifies the view that women's submission is a divine law as a result of the original sin inherent in women. Therefore, according to Fiorenza, if this verse is not interpreted based on the social and cultural context of its time, it will further confirm women's inferiority as something ordained by God (Fiorenza, 1983: 130).

Theologians Amina Wadud and Fatimah Mernissi have criticized the same thing in Islam. First, Amina Wadud, in her writing entitled *Quran and Women*, criticized the traditional interpretation of Surah An-Nisa 4:34: "Men are leaders for women because Allah has preferred some of them (men) over others (women)." According to Wadud, this verse is often interpreted to validate men's authority over women in the household and society. This patriarchal interpretation emphasizes that men have the right to lead and regulate women as mandated in the Koran (Wadud, 1999: 60). Therefore, in line with Ruether and Fiorenza, Wadud also emphasizes the importance of understanding texts in their historical context and promoting gender equality as a fundamental principle of Islam (Wadud).

Second, Fatimah Mernissi, in her writing about *The Veil and The Male Elite*, highlights the interpretation of the letter Al-Baqarah 2: 282: ".. And witness it with two male witnesses (among you). If there are no men, then (permissible) one man and two women from among the witnesses whom you approve...". Mernissi explains that traditional interpretations often use this verse to emphasize that a woman's testimony is worth half that of a man's. Of course, such an interpretation will form the understanding that women have intellectual and moral inferiority (Mernissi, 1991: 85). Therefore, Mernissi emphasizes that the interpretation that has been used to limit the role of women in public life must be reinterpreted more fairly and equally (Mernissi).

The critical thoughts of the theologians of the above religions certainly did not appear out of nowhere. Their critical ideas were born from the long struggle of women and men with feminist insights. The dream of a shared earth, a shared home that is just and equal for women and men, became the basis of the struggle. These critical ideas and joint movements were not immediately accepted and took place without obstacles. The feminist movement is often misunderstood not only by men but also by women, who assume that injustice and inequality between women and men are caused by women themselves. Women do not have sufficient self-capacity, women are inferior, have low self-esteem, are weak, illogical, emotional, and not independent, and various negative labels are attached to women. Therefore, the feminist movement is often suspected as an attempt by a handful of women to control society and subdue men. In other words, the feminist movement is only a movement by a handful of women to reverse the power relations that men have dominated. The joint struggle to claim justice and equality for women and men is not over.

The criticism of these feminist theologians is also a criticism to the religions in the land of Minahasa to be more critical and careful in interpreting the texts of the Book of Religion. The application of religious texts that ignore the context of the text, will plunge religions into partiality to gender biased practices. Religions are supposed to moderate hermeneutic studies of religious scripture in order to help the people understand the text as the meaning and purpose of the text was written at that time. More profoundly, religions should be open to the results of hermeneutic studies, especially if those results affirm about the fallacy of understanding during which

Departing from the above description, we get a concrete picture of how gender dynamics in Minahasa land are today. In addition, we also get a glimpse of working together in an effort to change society; also how to continuously encourage religions to be based on reality and therefore will be able to respond theologically to the issues of gender bias that occur in the land of Minahasa today.

Socio-Cultural Analysis Based on Gender Analysis

At the beginning of this article, I explained that the people in Minahasa have an egalitarian culture. Based on socio-cultural analysis, this culture is based on the recitation of Minahasa mythological narratives that describe the roles of men and women in the public sector as inevitable. Furthermore, this mythological narrative is maintained in Minahasa society through oral transmission from generation to generation in families and becomes a collective memory. Collective memory about women who play a role as social and religious leaders together with men; collective memory about women having the same competence and capacity as men; collective memory about there being no restrictions on the role of women in the public sector and the family. The problem is that such collective memory has been eroded so strongly by new values brought into Minahasa along with the development of society. It is natural that when there are women who are orbited as leaders—Regents, Mayors, Heads of Departments, Village Heads, Leaders in Judicial Institutions, Legislative, and Leaders of Religious Institutions, it becomes something exciting and unusual. This should be natural for the Minahasa society, which has an egalitarian culture.

Along with the shifted of egalitarian cultural values, in the previous explanation, I have presented some data related to the tendency of society to be unresponsive to gender. As a result, gender injustice and inequality that narrow down to physical and non-physical violence, even the increasing involvement of women as victims of human trafficking, are facts that cannot be ignored. The fundamental reflective question is, why is that? Is the Minahasa society unable to maintain egalitarian cultural values? What must be done together to claim cultural values full of equal respect and give space for the roles of women and men?

Concrete steps must be taken, namely, reclaiming egalitarian cultural values. One of the values is owned and maintained by several families in the Minahasa land (especially in the families of cultural actors). Namely the philosophy of *cawana pakuruan; pute waya tou maesa*. This philosophy in a free translation can be interpreted as "must not submit to others, and must not subordinate others; we are all the same." In technical terms of gender analysis, this philosophy emphasizes the prohibition of subordination, gender stereotyping, and marginalizing

anyone because all humans are equal. This philosophy can be a third space for relations between men and women who consciously make it the basis of relations. The third space referred to here is a space of equal interaction.

The theory of the third space refers to Hommi Bhabha's theory. Bhabha explains that the third space, namely hybridity or liminal space, provides a place for differences. This means that if so far society has been constructed with a mindset and understanding that reduces the existence of women, then reclaiming the philosophy of *cawana pakuruan*, *pute waya tou maesa* as the third space is a social effort that is carried out consciously to optimize cultural capital for social reconstruction efforts and social education that manifests in a gender-responsive society for women's justice and equality.

The second concrete step is that efforts to reclaim the egalitarian cultural values of Minahasa must be supported by legal reform at the local and national levels to be gender mainstreaming oriented. Regional regulations, laws, and other state regulations (Presidential Decrees, Presidential Regulations, Ministerial Decrees, etc.) must be formulated and implemented to ensure that women/gender minority groups have the same rights and protection. Some essential laws (laws) highlighted, namely the discrimination law, the domestic violence law, the Sexual Violence Penal Code, and the Trafficking in Persons Law, should be implemented by implementers with a vision of gender mainstreaming. Therefore, it is also important to encourage an increase in the resources of the legal apparatus authorized to implement all existing regulations.

The third step is optimizing the media for socialization and education on justice and equality for women. In the current era of digitalization, the media on various platforms increasingly plays an essential role in educating the public. More effectively, the media can also play a control function on both the behaviour of the public and the law enforcement apparatus. Therefore, all related agencies—both government agencies and non-governmental organizations should, together with the media, change the public's way of looking and attitude. Gender-biased social structures have taken root due to gender-insightful education. The media can optimize its role to educate and empower society (men and women) to understand proportionately the relationship and role of women and men; the relationship between women and men is not based on the division of labor due to gender differences but on self-competence.

The fourth step, in the internal environment of women, inclusiveness in decision-making should always involve the woman, especially related to her education, her freedom to determine a life partner, and all her dream. Inclusivity thus helps ensure policies and decisions are made better to reflect the needs and aspirations of all family and community members.

The fifth step is mainstreaming gender education for the community, especially the youth. Open information and more inclusive education become social capital in the land of Minahasa now to have more gender sensitivity. All such social capital is hoped to drive more remarkable change towards an equal society. Why the young people? Because they are more open to progressive thoughts and more related to life that values the rights of others, especially women. The next great hope will be the formation of a new society that is highly sensitive and continuously strives to create a life that prioritizes justice and gender equality.

Step six is to interpret religious scriptures that are visionary of justice and gender equality. This movement must begin with the realization that religious teachings have a unique societal position. Religious figures are still valued as wisdom, ethics, and morality sources. As such, religious institutions should increasingly open themselves to gender-inclusive and gender-responsive approaches to religious interpretation. The work of reinterpretation of texts with emphasis on a critical approach to the text of religious books, according to the context in which the text was born, should be given special attention. Thus, the people will be more educated and not casually use the verses of the Religious Book as any excuse justifying actions that ignore justice and gender equality.

CONCLUSION

Gender dynamics in Minahasa land: from traditional culture to the present refers to how gender roles, expectations, and identities are changing and evolving in society. It concerns how gender is understood, practiced, and negotiated across social, cultural, and political contexts. Gender dynamics also cannot ignore the fact regarding the unequal and unfair relationship between men and women that occurs in the land of Minahasa. The gender dynamics in the land of Minahasa also clearly show that gender inequality and injustice are caused by society not having gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness. Therefore, reclaiming cultural values that are constructive for gender justice and equality, laws that protect, education that transforms society, as well as women's self-awareness to reject acts of discrimination, subordination, labeling, non-violence, as well as all acts that injure women's existence, should become an integral part of the changes that need to be made in the land of Minahasa.

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