

The movement of Muslimah Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (MHTI) against feminism: Organizational mobilization, gendered agency, and the reproduction of gender hierarchy

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Article Information	Abstract:
Submitted: 2023-08-10 Revised: 2023-10-11 Published: 2023-12-13	Muslimah Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's (MHTI) rejection of feminism presents a paradox: its organizational mobilization expands women's agency in the public sphere, while its discourse and practices simultaneously naturalize domesticity, restrict women's political authority, and reproduce gender hierarchies through religious legitimation. This study aims to reconstruct MHTI's organizational development and mobilization from 2000 to 2017, analyze its construction of women's domestic, public, and political roles, and explain how antifeminist discourse is transformed into collective action while reproducing gender hierarchies. The study employs a socio-historical approach that draws on primary and secondary sources, source criticism, Resource Mobilization Theory, and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis. The findings demonstrate that: (1) MHTI developed through organizational consolidation, ideological cadre formation, expanding social networks, media utilization, and public mobilization; (2) MHTI acknowledged women's spiritual, moral, intellectual, and professional equality but designated domestic responsibilities as their primary role and restricted their access to governmental authority through religious legitimation; and (3) MHTI constructed feminism as part of Western liberalism, secularism, and capitalism while positioning sharia as an alternative system for protecting women. The study demonstrates that MHTI's mobilization expanded women's agency in the public sphere while maintaining domesticity, political restrictions, and gender hierarchies. Theoretically, it integrates Resource Mobilization Theory and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to explain the interconnections among ideology, organizational resources, networks, media, mobilization, and the reproduction of gender hierarchies. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of gender-religious literacy, constructive dialogue, and the promotion of critical, inclusive, and equitable women's participation.

Keywords:
Muslimah Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (MHTI); Organizational Mobilization; Gendered Agency; Gender Hierarchy.



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INTRODUCTION

Gender equality and feminism have become central themes in social debate because women have historically been positioned as a subordinate group and experienced inequality in both domestic and public spheres (Akurugu, 2020; Lombardozzi, 2022). Feminism emerged as an effort to challenge the structures that perpetuate such inequality, while women's mobilization has expanded their access to education, employment, professional careers, and political participation (Flores et al., 2021; Moghadam, 2020). Nevertheless, resistance to gender equality persists within some Muslim communities where religious norms and patriarchal cultures remain deeply rooted (Marshall et al., 2021; Rørbæk, 2016). At the same time, understandings of gender empowerment are not monolithic but are shaped by social, cultural, and religious contexts that influence women's positions and scope of action (Bedigen, 2022; Qibtiyah, 2018). Within this context, Muslimah Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (MHTI) rejects feminism on the grounds that it obscures the Islamic division of gender roles. It positions women primarily as wives and mothers while permitting their participation in the public sphere, a position that differs from liberal feminism's emphasis on equality in rights, opportunities, authority, and personal decision-making.

Previous studies on MHTI can be classified into three principal strands. First, studies of women within HTI/MHTI have focused on domestic roles, political involvement, gender constructions, and women's positions within the movement (Mujahidudin, 2012; Syamsam, 2017; Triantini, 2009). Second, research on HTI as a sociopolitical movement has examined its history, mobilization strategies, networks, cadre formation, and the dissemination of ideology (Mohamed Osman, 2010; Muhsin, 2012; Rijal, 2022). Third, other studies have investigated antifeminism, women's agency, and the reproduction of gender hierarchies within Islamic movements (Hariati, 2017; Rohmaniyah, 2020; Wieringa, 2009). Although these studies have contributed to understanding MHTI and women's positions within it, the relationship among organizational resource management, the construction of gender discourse, and the transformation of antifeminism into collective action between 2000 and 2017 has not been examined in an integrated manner. This study addresses this gap by combining historical reconstruction, Resource Mobilization Theory, and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to explain the mobilization of organizational resources and the construction of women's roles, agency, and boundaries of authority.

Integrating these two theoretical perspectives reveals a paradox of women's agency within MHTI: women's participation in cadre formation, media activities, organizational leadership, and public mobilization developed alongside the domestication of women's responsibilities, restrictions on their political authority, and gender differentiation. Agency is therefore understood not merely as emancipation but as a capacity developed within ideological, organizational, and discursive boundaries governing women's roles and authority. Based on this research gap, the study aims to reconstruct MHTI's organizational development and mobilization from 2000 to 2017, analyze its construction of women's domestic, public, and political roles, and explain how antifeminist discourse was transformed into collective action while reproducing gender hierarchies. It addresses three research questions: (1) How did MHTI mobilize, organize, and transform resources into mobilizing capacity? (2) How did MHTI's discourse construct women's roles, boundaries of authority, and agency? (3) How did antifeminist discourse shape collective identity and mobilize women while maintaining gender differentiation?

This study argues that MHTI's development and mobilization between 2000 and 2017 were driven not only by the ideology of the caliphate but also by its organizational capacity to transform structures, cadre formation, networks, media, and gender discourse into

collective action. In this process, organizational resources and gender discourse operated simultaneously: resources enabled women to participate in various mobilizing activities, whereas discourse defined the forms of participation, boundaries of authority, and spaces of agency available to them. This claim is examined through the historical method, encompassing heuristics, external and internal source criticism, interpretation, and historiography, and is subsequently analyzed using McCarthy and Zald's Resource Mobilization Theory and Lazar's Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis. Theoretically, this study explains the relationship among organizational capacity, the production of gender discourse, women's agency, and the reproduction of hierarchy within a transnational Islamic movement. In practical terms, its findings provide a foundation for governments, educators, women's organizations, and civil society to develop gender-religious literacy, gender-responsive policies, and critical dialogue concerning religion, family, public participation, and women's political authority.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study employs a socio-historical approach to reconstruct the development and mobilization of MHTI between 2000 and 2017 and to analyze its opposition to feminism (Jurgens, 2021). Weberian interpretive sociology is used to understand the subjective meanings of social action, ideological orientations, and relationships among actors, organizations, and political contexts. The historical method comprises four stages: heuristics, verification or source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). The historical reconstruction focuses on organizational structure, cadre formation, social networks, media utilization, public action, and institutional relations with the state. The study also examines MHTI's construction of women's domestic, public, and political roles and the transformation of antifeminism into collective mobilization. MHTI is understood as a women's social movement shaped by interactions among organizational dynamics, gender discourse, religious legitimation, and changes in Indonesia's modern political landscape.

Data Sources and Data Collection

The data were drawn from primary and secondary sources relevant to MHTI's activities, ideas, and organizational development. Primary sources included organizational publications, statements by organizational leaders, documentation of public actions, campaign materials, print and digital media, and policy documents concerning HTI's legal status. Secondary sources comprised the book *Perempuan HTI: Berjuang dalam Pasungan*, journal articles, previous studies, and online news reports. Data were collected through literature and archival searches using the keywords MHTI, HTI women, feminism, sharia, cadre formation, women's leadership, public action, and the dissolution of HTI. Sources were selected according to their relevance to the 2000–2017 period, authorship, publication date, document provenance, and relationship to the research focus.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in stages after the sources had been classified and verified. First, historical evidence was organized chronologically to reconstruct MHTI's organizational structure, cadre formation, networks, media activities, public actions, and relations with the state. Second, Resource Mobilization Theory was applied to identify human resources, leadership, organizational capacity, knowledge, legitimacy, networks, and media, and to explain how these resources were mobilized to support collective action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Third, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis was used to examine

lexical choices, modality, presuppositions, binary oppositions, subject positioning, religious legitimation, and representations of gendered power relations (Lazar, 2007). The coding results were grouped into three themes: organization, women's roles, and antifeminism. The findings were subsequently compared across periods and sources to explain the reciprocal relationships among organizational resources, discourse production, women's agency, and changes in the institutional environment. The final synthesis was presented historiographically and interpretively.

Data Trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness was ensured through external and internal source criticism, source triangulation, and interpretive transparency (Kipping et al., 2014). External criticism examined authorship, publication date, publisher, provenance, and document authenticity, whereas internal criticism assessed the credibility of the content, the sources' interests, proximity to the events, argumentative consistency, and potential media or organizational bias. Information concerning membership numbers, cadre formation, legal status, public actions, and statements by organizational figures was cross-checked against academic sources, organizational publications, contemporaneous news reports, and policy documents. MHTI's direct statements were distinguished from media representations, researchers' interpretations, and comparative literature. Data discrepancies and gaps were documented rather than standardized. An audit trail was maintained through a matrix recording sources, periods, themes, evidence, criticism, and interpretation, ensuring that conclusions remained traceable and did not exceed the available historical evidence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Organizational development and mobilization of MHTI, 2000–2017

Findings were reconstructed through heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography, drawing on academic, organizational, media, and policy sources. External criticism assessed authorship, dates, provenance, and authenticity, whereas internal criticism examined credibility, source interests, and cross-source consistency. McCarthy and Zald's (1977) Resource Mobilization Theory explained how MHTI acquired, organized, sustained, and transformed resources into collective action across four dimensions: organizational structure and cadre formation, social networks, media and public action, and state relations.

Table 1

Organizational Development and Mobilization of MHTI, 2000–2017

Period and theme	Historical evidence and sources	Source verification/critique	Historical interpretation	Resource mobilization mechanism
Emergence and open declaration, 1980s–2000	HTI was founded in Indonesia in the 1980s and publicly declared its existence in 2000; MHTI subsequently emerged as its women's organization.	Organizational archives, contemporary reports, academic studies, and official HTI/MHTI documents must be compared, particularly with respect to MHTI's autonomy.	The 2000 declaration marked the transition from internal formation to public dissemination and mobilization.	MHTI's structure organized women's participation and directed it toward HTI's ideological agenda.
Consolidation of structure, membership,	MHTI adopted DPP, DPD I, and DPD II levels and reportedly	Membership estimates, organizational levels,	Hierarchical structures connected central	Organizational levels coordinated

and cadre formation, 2000s–2010s	had approximately 50,000 members (Marcoes-Nastir, 2010). Cadre formation comprised <i>marhalah al-tathqif</i> , <i>tafa'ul ma'a al-ummah</i> , and <i>istilam al-hukm</i> (Kurniawan, 2012).	cadre stages, and coordination with HTI require verification against internal guidelines.	and regional branches, while cadre formation cultivated identity, knowledge, loyalty, and ideological commitment; MHTI's autonomy remained limited.	resources, while cadre formation transformed members into committed activists capable of disseminating organizational agendas.
Program and social-network development, 2000–2017	MHTI organized religious gatherings, Islamic commemorations, workshops, seminars, and book discussions involving sympathizers, <i>majelis taklim</i> , and Muslim women's organizations.	Invitations, activity reports, documentation, and cross-regional comparisons are required to verify program consistency and distinguish internal from collaborative activities.	Religious and educational programs strengthened members while extending relationships beyond formal membership.	Religious gatherings maintained loyalty, whereas workshops, seminars, and collaborations recruited sympathizers, expanded networks, and increased community access.
Publications, digital media, and public action, 2000–2017	MHTI used <i>Al-Islam</i> , <i>Al-Wa'ie</i> , <i>Media Umat</i> , Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, blogs, and Hizbut Tahrir websites to disseminate its views (Olviana, 2017). Demonstrations promoted the caliphate and opposed policies considered incompatible with Islamic law.	Media ownership, management, publication frequency, and institutional links require confirmation; demonstrations must be verified by date, location, participants, and demands.	Mobilization expanded from face-to-face cadre formation to print and digital communication and collective action in public spaces.	Media reduced communication costs, standardized issue framing, and expanded outreach, while demonstrations transformed networks, identity, and communication into visible collective action.
Relations with the state and organizational restriction, 2014–2017	HTI obtained legal recognition as a mass organization in 2014, but the government revoked its legal status in 2017 under mass-organization regulations, including Article 80A of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 2/2017 (Uswatusolihah & Sangidun, 2018).	The recognition decree, revocation decision, and relevant regulation require comparison. The legal status belonged to HTI rather than MHTI as a separate entity.	State–HTI relations shifted from administrative recognition to institutional restriction, affecting MHTI's formal activities within HTI's structure.	Recognition provided legitimacy and institutional access, whereas revocation reduced formal legitimacy and restricted the open use of organizational structures.

Source: Author's analysis (2023).

Table 1 demonstrates that MHTI's development was determined not only by members' acceptance of HTI's ideology but also by the organization's capacity to acquire and manage

resources. The DPP, DPD I, and DPD II structures coordinated relations between the central and regional levels, while the estimated membership of 50,000 indicates the scale of its human resources, although this figure requires confirmation from other sources (Marcoes-Nastir, 2010). The three stages of cadre formation instilled ideology, cultivated loyalty, and prepared members to engage with society and support the organization's political objectives (Kurniawan, 2012).

Internal resources were expanded through religious gatherings, workshops, seminars, book discussions, *majelis taklim*, and relationships with Muslim women's organizations. From the perspective of McCarthy and Zald (1977), these activities served as mechanisms for recruitment, commitment maintenance, and network expansion, linking internal cadre development to mobilization beyond formal membership. The use of *Al-Islam*, *Al-Wa'ie*, *Media Umat*, and digital media strengthened organizational communication, standardized interpretations of sociopolitical issues, and connected networks across regions (Olviana, 2017). Public actions subsequently transformed organizational resources, members, ideology, networks, and media into collective action and publicly articulated demands.

Institutional relations with the state also shaped MHTI's development. HTI's acquisition of legal-entity status in 2014 provided formal legitimacy, whereas the revocation of this status and its dissolution in 2017 restricted its legitimacy and capacity for open mobilization (Uswatusolihah & Sangidun, 2018). However, without additional historical evidence, the dissolution cannot be interpreted as having immediately terminated MHTI's networks and ideological dissemination. From a historiographical perspective, MHTI's development between 2000 and 2017 proceeded through structural consolidation, cadre formation, network expansion, media utilization, and collective mobilization. Thus, the movement's strength derived not only from the ideology of the caliphate but also from its capacity to accumulate, coordinate, and transform resources into collective capacity, whose continuity depended on access to legitimacy and institutional space.

MHTI's conception of women's domestic, public, and political roles

Historical sources on MHTI's ideas and actions were critically evaluated to reconstruct women's domestic, public, and political roles. Comparative literature-informed interpretation, but was not treated as evidence of MHTI's views; primary documents remained necessary to substantiate claims derived from secondary studies. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis examined lexical choices, modality, subject-positioning, role-differentiation, legitimation, and authority boundaries, revealing equality and dignity, domestic responsibility, conditional public participation, and religiously legitimized political restrictions.

Table 2

Discursive Construction of Women's Roles in MHTI Thought

Theme	Discourse units and sources	Discursive strategy	Gender and power representation	FCDA interpretation
Women's equality and dignity	Women possess dignity and spiritual, moral, and intellectual capacities equal to men. Comparative studies similarly emphasize women's dignity and historical contributions in	"Equal," "noble," and "equal capacity" positively affirm women's status.	Women are represented as dignified and equally capable, although normative equality does not determine equal roles and power.	Equality legitimizes MHTI's gender arrangements as fair and harmonious rather than discriminatory.

Islam (Negara & Juliani, 2022; Umami & Mega Puspita, 2023).				
Domestication of women's responsibilities	Women's primary roles are managing households, serving husbands, caring for families, and educating children as contributions to religion and the state (Triantini, 2012).	"Primary," "responsible," "serve," "care," and "educate" construct obligation and naturalize domestic responsibility.	Women bear responsibility for family continuity, while men's domestic responsibilities remain unexplained.	Gender differentiation confers recognition on women's domestic roles while restricting their identities and social responsibilities.
Conditional public participation	Women may work as professionals or employees, engage in trade, serve as school principals, and lead organizations.	"Permitted" signifies authorized access rather than full freedom, while occupational categories define legitimate participation.	Women are represented as social and professional actors whose participation remains subject to organizational ideology.	MHTI recognizes women's public agency only outside domains defined as governmental authority.
Political exclusion and religious legitimization	Women are prohibited from becoming <i>khalifah</i> , <i>mu'awin</i> , <i>wali</i> , <i>'amil</i> , or holding other governmental offices (An-Nabhani, 2001). The Abu Bakrah hadith legitimizes this restriction. On 14 September 2004, South Sulawesi MHTI organized a Makassar <i>long march</i> declaring maleness a leadership requirement (Irmawati, 2004).	Prohibitive modality, classifications of government offices, and religious texts establish firm boundaries around women's authority.	Government is constructed as a male domain; women may participate socially but cannot access the highest political authority.	Religious discourse transforms political exclusion into a sacred normative rule, while the 2004 action translated this discourse into collective political practice.

Source: Author's analysis (2023)

Table 2 reveals a tension between the affirmation of equality and gender-based role differentiation. MHTI acknowledges that women possess dignity and spiritual, moral, and intellectual capacities equal to those of men. Women are also permitted to pursue professional employment and lead organizations. However, this equality is not accompanied by an equal distribution of responsibilities and authority. Women remain primarily responsible for domestic affairs and are excluded from certain governmental positions. This pattern indicates that MHTI's conception of equality is selective. Equality is recognized in the domains of humanity, spirituality, education, employment, and certain social activities, but is restricted when governmental authority is involved. The central issue, therefore, is not the absence of recognition for women but the boundaries imposed on the roles and forms of authority they may exercise.

From the perspective of Lazar's (2007) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, language does not merely describe women but also produces and naturalizes gender relations. Expressions such as "primary role," "responsible for," "serve," and "educate" construct domestic responsibility as a natural identity glorified as a contribution to religion and the state. Consequently, the gendered division of labor is represented as harmony and justice rather than inequality. In the public sphere, the modality "permitted" indicates that women's participation is conditional. Women may work, engage in trade, pursue professional careers, and lead organizations, but cannot access governmental authority. The Abu Bakrah hadith legitimizes these restrictions as normative prescriptions by categorizing the offices of *khalifah*, *mu'awin*, *wali*, and *'amil* as positions unavailable to women.

Contextual interpretations of the Abu Bakrah hadith through *asbāb al-wurūd*, the Persian political context, and the distinction between *khbariyah* and *nahiy* should be positioned as counter-discourses rather than as MHTI's views when they originate from other scholars. This distinction separates evidence of MHTI's thought from the researcher's critical position. MHTI's 2004 action in Makassar demonstrated how the male-leadership requirement was translated into the public sphere through a *long march*, pamphlets, and political appeals intended to influence public choices (Irmawati, 2004). Overall, MHTI affirms women's dignity, naturalizes their domestic responsibilities, conditionally permits their public participation, and restricts their political authority. This ambivalence demonstrates that the language of equality can coexist with the reproduction of gender hierarchy without an equal distribution of power.

Anti-feminist discourse and MHTI mobilization, 2000–2017

MHTI's opposition to feminism between 2000 and 2017 was reconstructed from media reports, organizational leaders' statements, documentation of public actions, and previous studies. Source criticism distinguished actors' direct statements from media representations and researchers' interpretations. Ulfah (2012) served as comparative literature on liberal feminism rather than as evidence of MHTI's views. Lazar's (2007) FCDA examined lexical choices, modality, presuppositions, binary oppositions, subject positioning, ideological legitimation, and discourse practice relations. Four themes emerged: feminism as a Western threat, the naturalization of motherhood and family, sharia as an alternative protective discourse, and the transformation of antifeminism into collective mobilization.

Table 3

Antifeminist Discourse and MHTI Mobilization, 2000–2017

Theme	Evidence and sources	Discursive strategy	Gender and power relations	FCDA interpretation
Feminism as a Western threat	MHTI associated feminism with liberalism, secularism, capitalism, and Western thought, arguing that it disrupted Islamic gender roles (Pradita, 2020). Its 2015 Banda Aceh campaign similarly rejected gender equality as liberal	Labels such as "Western," "liberal," "secular," and "capitalist" constructed a binary opposition between Islam and feminism, positioning feminism as an external threat to the Muslim community.	Muslim women were represented as requiring protection from Western ideology, while MHTI claimed authority to define ideas compatible with their religious identity.	Islam was associated with truth and order, whereas feminism was linked to deviation and destruction. This polarization reduced diverse feminist perspectives to a single anti-Islamic category.

	and secular (Afif, 2015).			
Naturalization of motherhood and family roles	MHTI claimed that feminism encouraged women to neglect children, abandon motherhood, undermine male leadership, and destroy families (Pradita, 2020). Similar narratives appeared in Mother's Day demonstrations in West and Central Java in 2010 and in Bandar Lampung and Makassar in 2015 (Prasetyo, 2010; Syahidah, 2015; Yusran, 2015).	Terms such as "primary role," "neglect," "family destruction," and "fitrah" presupposed childcare as women's natural responsibility and presented feminism as the cause of family breakdown.	Women were assigned moral responsibility for family continuity and future generations, while male leadership was naturalized and removed from critical examination.	The glorification of motherhood simultaneously produced restriction: women were honored as educators of future generations but primarily bound to domestic roles.
Sharia as an alternative protective discourse	The campaign "Women and Sharia: Separating Reality and Fiction" rejected portrayals of Islamic law as discriminatory. Maratika Handayani associated sharia with women's safety and dignity, while Indah Kartika Sari contrasted capitalist exploitation with Islamic protection (Dachroni, 2015; Azhar, 2015).	Through discursive reversal, MHTI identified capitalism, Western media, and feminism—not sharia—as oppressive. Terms such as "truth," "dignity," "security," and "protection" legitimized sharia morally.	Women were represented as victims of capitalist exploitation and beneficiaries of sharia, while MHTI positioned itself as the defender of women's rights and welfare.	MHTI rearticulated the language of rights, dignity, and welfare as a counterdiscourse to feminism, while retaining ideologically prescribed gender roles.
Antifeminism as collective mobilization	Antifeminist demonstrations were held in West Java and Surakarta in December 2010 and across Banda Aceh, Batam, Bengkulu, Bandar Lampung, Makassar, and other cities in March 2015. The Batam campaign was presented as part of an international movement spanning Britain, Tunisia,	Collective pronouns, obligation markers such as "must," and imperatives such as "reject," "join," "support," and "struggle" transformed ideology into collective action. Mother's Day and International Women's Day were appropriated to contest dominant meanings of gender	MHTI members appeared as active women exercising leadership and public voice, yet their agency supported domestic gender roles and male authority.	Mobilization revealed a paradox of agency: women used organizational leadership, speeches, campaigns, and demonstrations to reproduce a discourse prioritizing domesticity and limiting gender-equality agendas.

Turkey, Palestine, and Indonesia (Prasetyo, 2010; Afif, 2015; Dachroni, 2015; Azhar, 2015; Syahidah, 2015; Yusran, 2015).	equality.
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Source: Author's analysis (2023).

Table 3 demonstrates that MHTI's opposition to feminism was constructed through the polarization of Islam and the West. Feminism was conflated with liberalism, secularism, and capitalism and subsequently represented as a threat to sharia, the family, male leadership, motherhood, and the future of Muslim generations. Women were constructed as mothers, educators of future generations, and guardians of the family through terms such as "fitrah," "primary role," and "educators of future generations," which naturalized the gender-based division of labor. Changes to this division were portrayed as causing child neglect and family breakdown. As an alternative, MHTI associated sharia with dignity, security, welfare, and the protection of women's rights, whereas capitalism and feminism were linked to the exploitation and commodification of women's bodies, as reflected in the speeches of Maratika Handayani and Indah Kartika Sari (Azhar, 2015; Dachroni, 2015).

From the perspective of Lazar's (2007) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, the "Islam–West" opposition constructs an "us–them" boundary that legitimizes MHTI's authority to speak on behalf of Muslim women. Claims that feminism causes the loss of motherhood, the collapse of male leadership, and family destruction, despite lacking empirical substantiation, function as ideological presuppositions that naturalize domesticity and frame social change as a moral threat. MHTI also rearticulates the terms "rights," "dignity," "welfare," "security," and "protection" within a sharia framework. Liberal feminism, which emphasizes women's equal rational capacities and educational opportunities, serves as a comparative discourse rather than as evidence of MHTI's views and demonstrates that feminism does not necessarily reject family, motherhood, or religion (Ulfah, 2012). Through actions on Mother's Day and International Women's Day, collective pronouns, modalities of obligation, and direct appeals transformed antifeminism into mobilization. Paradoxically, women exercised political agency through leadership, speeches, campaigns, and demonstrations to defend domesticity and reject gender equality.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that: (1) MHTI's development between 2000 and 2017 occurred through the consolidation of organizational structures, ideological cadre formation, the expansion of social networks, media utilization, and the mobilization of public action; (2) MHTI acknowledged women's spiritual, moral, intellectual, and professional equality but designated domestic responsibilities as their primary role and restricted their access to governmental authority through religious legitimation; and (3) MHTI constructed feminism as part of Western liberalism, secularism, and capitalism while positioning sharia as an alternative system for protecting women. HTI's acquisition of legal-entity status in 2014 provided formal institutional space for its activities, including those of MHTI as the women's organization within its structure, whereas the revocation of this status in 2017 also restricted MHTI's formal institutional space. Overall, organizational resources and gender discourse were intertwined in shaping MHTI women's identity, agency, legitimacy, and collective mobilization.

Socially, these findings are relevant to the increasing participation of women in religious movements, family education, digital spaces, and identity politics in Indonesia. MHTI's experience demonstrates that women's organizational involvement does not necessarily advance gender equality, as their agency may develop alongside the reproduction of domestic restrictions and limitations on women's political authority (Tøllefsen & Giudice, 2017). Its use of media also illustrates how ideas concerning sharia, feminism, and the family were widely disseminated and influenced public opinion beyond organizational boundaries (Utami, 2011). Following HTI's dissolution, these issues intersected with freedom of association, the boundaries of state ideology, and the need to monitor the continuation of religious movements beyond formal organizational structures (Fauzi & Kosandi, 2022; Ramadanti & Hisbullah, 2020). In the contemporary context, these findings underscore the importance of gender and digital literacy in enabling society to critically evaluate religious discourse, prevent polarization, and support women's equal participation in families, communities, education, and government amid rapid social change.

Theoretically, Resource Mobilization Theory explains that MHTI's development and mobilization were determined not only by ideology but also by its capacity to mobilize members, leadership, networks, media, knowledge, and legitimacy (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). FCDA complements this explanation by demonstrating that resources are not mobilized within a value-neutral space; rather, mobilization is directed by language that constructs gendered identities, obligations, and boundaries (Lazar, 2007). Terms such as "fitrah" and "primary role" can naturalize women's domesticity by framing gendered role divisions as inherent, whereas restrictions concerning activities that are "permitted" and "prohibited" can selectively constrain women's agency (Fathoni, 2020; Putri & Poerwandari, 2023). Organizational structures and cadre formation provide channels for dissemination, while sharia discourse supplies legitimacy and collective identity. Media subsequently expand the circulation of this discourse, and demonstrations transform it into public action (Rijal, 2022; Shobron, 2014). Integrating the two theories reveals a reciprocal relationship: resources enable discourse to circulate, while discourse directs the use of resources and the objectives of mobilization throughout each phase of organizational development and institutional change.

This study highlights the need to distinguish women's agency from the transformation of gender relations. MHTI women were not entirely passive; they emerged as actors who negotiated their status and social space through ideological learning, network building, religious outreach, and participation in public and digital spheres (Nisa, 2019). However, these activities did not automatically transform gendered power relations. Agency can be exercised to negotiate spaces for participation while simultaneously maintaining women's domesticity and male dominance within structures of governmental authority (Newman et al., 2017; Ruslin, 2022). This understanding aligns with the argument that religious women's agency does not always take the form of liberal resistance to norms but may be expressed through obedience, self-formation, and action within religious traditions (Mahmood, 2005). Research on women in Islamic movements should therefore avoid two forms of simplification: positioning women solely as victims of patriarchy and interpreting public activism as evidence of emancipation. The broader scholarly implication is that agency must be assessed according to its context, objectives, power constraints, and effects on gender relations in contemporary social and political life.

This study confirms Arif's (2016) findings regarding the importance of HTI's cadre formation and ideological orientation and reinforces Chaidaroh's (2016) argument concerning the centrality of domestic roles in MHTI's thought. However, it extends both

studies by demonstrating that organizational structures and gender discourse operate as mutually reinforcing mechanisms of mobilization. The findings on media utilization also advance Ulfah's (2013) study by revealing a relationship between discourse production and the movement's expanding reach. MHTI's opposition to feminism was based on the assumption that changing the gendered division of roles would disrupt the family structure and domestic harmony considered consistent with Islam. This position contrasts with the concept of *feminist mothering*, which regards the family as a space for challenging the reproduction of gender inequality (Green, 2005). Meanwhile, actions across different regions demonstrate how discourse was translated into political practice (Azmy, 2020). Unlike studies that examine organization, ideology, media, and action separately, this study integrates these elements into a single historical process and positions women's agency as the link between discourse production and movement mobilization across multiple levels and social spaces.

This study proposes several recommendations. Universities and women's organizations can develop gender religious literacy modules that integrate source criticism, contextual readings of religious texts, and women's lived experiences. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection can facilitate regular forums that bring together religious scholars, academics, women's organizations, and activists to discuss leadership, family, and political participation without stigmatization. Archival institutions and research centers should document MHTI's publications, websites, social media, and activities to accurately investigate changes in its networks after 2017. Future research should conduct interviews with former members and compare MHTI with other Muslim women's organizations. The implementation of literacy modules and dialogue forums can be evaluated by openness to diverse interpretations, women's involvement in decision-making, and acceptance of differing religious and gender perspectives.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that MHTI's development between 2000 and 2017 demonstrates that women's movements within religious organizations are driven not only by ideology but also by the integrated management of organizational resources, social networks, media, and public mobilization. MHTI acknowledges women's spiritual and professional equality but restricts their public roles through religious legitimation that designates domestic responsibility as their primary role and limits their access to governmental authority. Its rejection of feminism as a Western product and promotion of sharia as an alternative system illustrate how gender discourse is framed as resistance to foreign influence while simultaneously reproducing gender hierarchies. Changes in HTI's legal status affected MHTI's institutional space but did not necessarily halt the circulation of its ideas through informal networks and digital media.

The study's theoretical contribution lies in integrating Resource Mobilization Theory and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to explain the reciprocal relationship between organizational resources and gender discourse in shaping women's identities, boundaries of participation, and mobilization. In practical terms, the findings underscore the importance of gender, religious, and digital literacy, dialogue forums, and the promotion of women's critical and inclusive participation in families, communities, education, and government.

This study is limited by its reliance on written sources, organizational publications, media archives, and policy documents; consequently, it does not fully capture MHTI members' subjective experiences and internal dynamics, particularly after 2017. Future

studies should engage former members through interviews, oral histories, and digital ethnography and compare MHTI with other Muslim women's organizations to examine variations in gender constructions, mobilization strategies, and post-dissolution network transformations.

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