

The Role of Female Activists in Enhancing Inter-Member Organizational Performance: A Case Study of the PMII Organization at UIN Sumatera Utara

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the contributions of female activists to the performance of inter-member relations within the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII) organization at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU). A qualitative research method was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews involving rayon administrators from six faculties, as well as documentation and literature studies. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis, consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that female activists play a significant role in fostering effective communication, resolving conflicts through persuasive approaches, and enhancing participation and solidarity among members. Their inclusive and empathetic leadership has been shown to create a conducive working environment and improve overall organizational effectiveness. The study concludes that the transformational leadership style exhibited by female activists contributes to the development of a collaborative, equitable, and gender-inclusive organizational culture.

Introduction

The Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII) is a student organization that has an important role in shaping the character and leadership of students in higher education (Izudin, 2021; Basit, 2016; Amin & Ritonga, 2023). Through various stages of regeneration, PMII instills Islamic and national values that become the ideological basis as well as a tool to build the intellectual, emotional, and social capacity of its members. The organization not only focuses on the spiritual aspect of Islam, but also encourages students' active involvement in national and societal issues (Moslimany et al., 2024; Maidugu & Isah, 2024). PMII provides space for students to develop their potential through scientific discussions, leadership training, social advocacy, and community empowerment activities. PMII's presence also strengthens the spirit of collaboration and social responsibility among students. With a comprehensive regeneration approach, PMII forms individuals who are critical, independent, and committed to social change. Therefore, PMII is a strategic forum in creating a young generation with excellence and integrity amidst the dynamics of higher education and society (Pebriadi, 2024, Chudzaifah et al., 2024).

Although PMII is open to all students regardless of gender, the reality on the ground still shows an imbalance of participation between men and women in its organizational structure (Khan & Nag, 2024; Chen et al., 2025). Women activists often face cultural and structural barriers that prevent them from playing an active role in important decision-making processes. This suggests that the values of gender equality are not yet fully embodied in everyday organizational practices. Although gender issues are often discussed in various internal forums,

their implementation has not been consistent and comprehensive. Women still tend to be marginalized in strategic positions, so their participation is not yet fully optimal. This situation reflects that efforts towards gender justice in the PMII organization still require systemic and cultural strengthening.

PMII at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) has rayons in six faculties and is one of the active and growing student organizations. In this structure, performance among members becomes the main indicator in measuring organizational effectiveness. A conducive and harmonious working atmosphere among members will strengthen collaboration and facilitate the achievement of organizational goals (Paroli, 2024; Surianto & Nurfahir, 2024). Conversely, internal conflict and participation imbalance can be the main obstacle to organizational productivity (Mahmudah, 2022; Irwan, 2024; Thelma & Ngulube, 2024). Women activists in PMII have great potential as drivers of organizational dynamics. Their inclusive and communicative leadership style contributes to persuasive conflict resolution, strengthening solidarity, and building a supportive work climate. However, this significant role has not fully received structural recognition, so an affirmative approach is still needed to optimize their strategic participation (A. F. H. Al Hakim, 2023; Singha, 2024).

This research aims to examine the contribution of female activists to the performance of members in the PMII UINSU organization. By exploring how the role of women can positively influence organizational dynamics, this research is expected to provide recommendations for creating a more inclusive and gender-equitable organizational system. This approach not only aims to improve the internal structure of the organization, but also to form an adaptive and progressive organizational culture (Purwanti et al., 2022; Ghaleb, 2024).

Methods

In this study the authors used a qualitative type of research. Qualitative research is a search for in-depth information or data about a symptom, fact or reality in narrative form (Usman et al., 2025; Lenberg et al., 2024). Qualitative methods are widely used in political science research because they are able to produce descriptive data both orally and in writing. With this qualitative research method, it is hoped that it can explore and clearly describe the role of women activists in the performance of organizational members (case study of pmii uinsu organization).

The data collection technique that the author uses in this study consists of two data sources, as follows:

Primary Data

Primary data is data obtained directly or in the field conducted by the author (Kumar & Praveenakumar, 2025; Karunarathna et al., 2024). One of them is the interview technique. Interview is a process of obtaining information for research purposes by means of questions and answers to dig up information or data on several sources, including sister Putri Alisi as Rayon Chairperson of the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies along with the management of KOPRI, Brother Raju Harahap as Rayon Chairperson of the Faculty of Da'wah along with the management of KOPRI and Communication, Mr. Kandar as Chairman of the Rayon of the Faculty of Social Sciences and the management of KOPRI, Mr. Arjuna as Chairman of the Rayon of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Keguruan Sciences and the management of KOPRI, Mr. Darwin as Chairman of the Rayon of the Faculty of Economics and Business and the management of KOPRI, Mr. Ananda Rayo as Chairman of the Rayon of the Faculty of Sharia and Law and the management of KOPRI.

Secondary data

Secondary data used in this research is in the form of literature studies and document reviews, namely efforts made by the author to find literature or references that are closely related to the research topic.

Results and Discussion

Level of Involvement of Women Activists in PMII UIN North Sumatera

The involvement of women activists in the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII) UIN North Sumatera shows positive and progressive dynamics. Women are no longer just a complement in the organizational structure, but have actively taken an important role in various aspects of organizational activities. This involvement is proof that PMII at UIN SU provides ample space for female cadres to develop their potential and contribution. In the organizational structure, female activists are involved in various levels of leadership. They are trusted to fill important positions, such as chairman, secretary, treasurer, and coordinator in strategic areas such as regeneration, advocacy, and human resource development. This participation is not just symbolic, but shows the real trust and capability of women cadres in managing the organization.

The activity committee is another space where women's involvement is very prominent. In various agendas such as cadre training, seminars, and social actions, female cadres appear as initiators and main implementers. This shows that they are not only structurally active, but also substantive in encouraging the movement and sustainability of the organization. This active participation forms a strong leadership character among women activists. In addition, women's involvement also provides its own color in the organizational decision-making process. Their presence allows for a more inclusive and sensitive perspective on social issues, especially those related to women and vulnerable groups. Women activists in PMII UIN SU also encourage the discourse of gender justice and equality in the context of Islamic and student affairs, which is part of PMII's social transformation mission.

Their involvement is not limited to symbolic aspects, but reflects real contributions in leadership, advocacy of gender issues, and institutional development. At the organizational structure level, female cadres actively fill strategic positions starting from the rayon (department), commissariat (faculty), to the branch level. They are trusted to carry out the mandate as secretary, treasurer, commissariat chairman, and coordinator of fields such as regeneration, advocacy, and womanhood, which proves that the presence of women is a driving force in the organization.

In addition, women in PMII UINSU also have a significant role in the regeneration process. They are involved as instructors and facilitators in various formal trainings such as MAPABA, PKD, and PKL. This involvement shows the recognition of their capacity in creating and fostering a new generation of empowered cadres. On the other hand, women activists are also at the forefront of raising and fighting for important issues such as gender equality, violence against women, sexual harassment on campus, and student rights. They not only voice their aspirations, but also initiate various programs such as seminars, women's leadership training, and advocacy for campus policies that are more inclusive and responsive to women's needs.

However, their struggle is not free from structural and cultural challenges, including patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and limited access to strategic decision-making spaces. Nevertheless, many female cadres have managed to break through these barriers and prove their competence as strong and influential leaders. Furthermore, they also actively collaborate

with various external organizations such as NGOs, women's communities, and Islamic feminist groups in the North Sumatra region. This initiative reflects critical awareness and openness to expand the network of women's struggles and encourage the creation of more just and equal social change.

Overall, the high involvement of women in PMII UIN SU reflects progress in internalizing the values of gender equality and justice within the organization. PMII is not only a space for intellectual and spiritual regeneration, but also a place of actualization for young women to emerge as agents of change. In the future, it is important to maintain consistency and expand the space for women's participation so that it is not only structurally inclusive, but also ideologically and praxis transformative. In an effort to realize gender equality, PMII has implemented various strategies, such as socializing gender equality through formal, non-formal, and informal activities, as well as providing accessibility for women to occupy strategic positions and influence decision-making in the organization. This strategy aims to increase women's involvement in organizational politics and ensure fair representation in leadership structures (Ramadhani, 2022).

Nonetheless, challenges remain, especially related to the patriarchal culture that is still inherent in some parts of the organization. Some studies show that although women are active in various activities, they often do not occupy strategic positions in the organizational structure, and their contribution in decision-making is still limited. To overcome these challenges, PMII needs to continue strengthening gender awareness among its members, both men and women. Education and training on gender equality issues must be conducted on an ongoing basis, involving all members to create a common and deep understanding of the importance of women's roles in the organization (Asiaah, 2023; Benschop & Verloo, 2011; Smith & Sinkford, 2022). By maintaining consistency in implementing gender equality strategies and expanding the space for women's participation, PMII can ensure that the organization is not only structurally inclusive, but also ideologically and praxis transformative. This will strengthen PMII's position as an organization capable of creating positive and sustainable social change.

Table 1. Level of Involvement of Women Activists in PMII UIN North Sumatera

| Faculty | Position Held | Role Type | Engagement Level |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Tarbiyah and Keguruan | Chairman of KOPRI Rayon | Leadership | High |
| Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies | Rayon Chair | Leadership and regeneration | High |
| Sharia and law | Advocacy Coordinator | Strategic and advocacy | Medium |
| Da'wah and Communication | Head of regeneration | Cadre training | High |
| Economics and Islamic Business | Rayon Treasurer | Finance and logistics | Medium |
| Social Science | HR Coordinator | Member Development | High |

Forms of Contribution of Women Activists to the Organization's performance

Women activists in the PMII UIN North Sumatera organization play an important role in supporting the smooth and effective performance of the organization. One of the most prominent contributions is their role in improving the quality of internal communication. They consistently initiate and maintain the continuity of regular monthly meetings as a coordination forum between members (Nurdin & Sumantri, 2018; Habl et al., 2024; Kourkouli, 2024).

Through these meetings, they encourage information disclosure and ensure that all elements of the organization receive the same, appropriate, and relevant information to the needs of the organization. More than just conveying information, women activists also strengthen the practice of two-way communication between administrators and members. They create a healthy, open and participatory discussion space, so that every member feels involved in the decision-making process. With this more equal communication, trust and closeness between members increases, which indirectly strengthens the sense of shared responsibility in running the wheels of the organization.

In addition, the ability of women activists to resolve conflicts is a valuable asset for the sustainability of the organization. In the face of dynamics that often cause friction between members, they are present as mediators who are able to mediate with a persuasive and empathetic approach. They are not only mediators, but also dialog facilitators who help the parties find common ground and constructive solutions without prolonging tensions.

Another significant contribution is seen in their efforts to encourage the active involvement of members in every organizational activity. Women activists are known to have a humanist and inclusive approach, where they actively embrace and invite members, especially those who have not been active, to get involved in various organizational programs and agendas. Their supportive and passionate attitude is able to foster motivation and build a more dynamic and enjoyable organizational climate.

With these various contributions, it is clear that the presence of women activists not only strengthens the organizational structure, but also has a positive influence on the working atmosphere, quality of interaction, and the collective spirit of members. They become the driving force that not only makes work programs successful, but also fosters a healthy and inclusive organizational culture. This role proves that gender equality in organizations is not only a matter of representation, but also a matter of real contribution to the quality and performance of the organization as a whole. The active role of women activists in the PMII UIN North Sumatra organization reflects the characteristics of transformational leadership. In this approach, leadership focuses not only on mechanically achieving organizational targets, but also on inspiring, motivating, and building strong relationships between leaders and members. Women activists tend to apply a more collaborative leadership style, where decision-making is done by involving many parties, as well as creating an equal space for all voices to be heard (Gaur et al., 2024).

The empathic attitude shown by women activists is also an important element in building a supportive and harmonious organizational environment. They are more sensitive to the dynamics between members and are able to understand problems from various perspectives. With this humane approach, they not only resolve conflicts effectively, but also strengthen the sense of community and solidarity within the organization. This kind of leadership encourages a more open, respectful and growth-oriented working atmosphere. Overall, these collaborative and empathic leadership styles of women enrich organizational practices with transformational values. They not only perform structural duties, but also become agents of change who foster individual and collective development simultaneously. This role not only strengthens organizational effectiveness, but also provides evidence that human values-based leadership is capable of creating deeper and more sustainable change in the organizational environment (Prameswari et al., 2024).

Table 2. Forms of Contribution of Women Activists to Organizational Performance

| Organizational Aspects | Forms of Contribution of Women Activists | Impact on Member Performance |
|------------------------|--|------------------------------|
|------------------------|--|------------------------------|

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Internal Communication | Establish regular discussions, active coordination | Increase openness and trust |
| Conflict resolution | Persuasive and empathic approach | Increase tension and conflict |
| Member participation | Encourage passive member engagement | Increase collective participation |
| Leadership | Collaborative and transformational styles | Increase morale and solidarity |
| Gender advocacy | Socialization of gender equality and justice issues | Increase organizational sensitivity |

Other Members' Perceptions of Women's Roles

Most PMII UIN North Sumatera members, both male and female, show a strong recognition of the contribution of women activists in the organization. They see that women are not only administratively active, but also play an important role in decision-making, program implementation, and creating a more inclusive and supportive organizational atmosphere. This recognition reflects a shift towards a more progressive view of gender roles in the organizational space, where ability and contribution are the main benchmarks, not gender. However, the findings also show that there are still a small number of members who view women in the organization as mere appendages. This view is usually born from the construction of a patriarchal culture that has not been fully unraveled, even in intellectual environments and student organizations. This kind of perception can hinder the process of equal roles in organizations and slow down the progress of movements based on the principles of justice and inclusion (Pertiwi, 2024).

These different perspectives show that while there has been progress in accepting women's leadership and participation, there is still a need for continued efforts to build collective awareness. Gender education, involving women in strategic forums, and strengthening the narrative of equality need to be promoted so that the organization truly becomes a fair and equal space for all members, regardless of gender. Organizational cultural transformation must go hand in hand with structural transformation so that the role of women is not only recognized symbolically, but also substantially and equally. Pierre Bourdieu introduced the concepts of habitus and symbolic violence to explain how masculine dominance is maintained in society. Habitus refers to mental structures and dispositions formed through social experience, while symbolic violence is an invisible but accepted form of domination. In organizational contexts, women often accept subordinate positions as natural, without being aware of the social structures that support such inequality. This cultural gender bias affects organizational dynamics, where women may not be given equal opportunities to lead or contribute optimally. The view of women as mere "appendages" can hinder the development of an inclusive and equitable organization. To create change, collective awareness and systematic efforts are needed to deconstruct existing patriarchal norms (Lestari, 2021).

In Islamic teachings, women have equal rights as creatures of God, and there is no difference in value between men and women before Him. Islam views gender equality as a whole, including in spiritual, intellectual, and physical aspects. Nevertheless, socially and religiously, the role of women is still considered very important in building civilization. Through the central role of women, it is hoped that the next generation will be born with noble character and be able to bring progress to the people and nation (Katimin et al., 2024).

The view that men are naturally superior in leadership is now being challenged, especially by progressive scholars who support the principle of gender equality. KH. Husein Muhammad, as

one of the most vocal scholars on this issue, asserts that Islam does not explicitly prohibit women from being involved in public leadership, including strategic positions such as head of state. According to him, male dominance in public office is not a standard teaching in Islam, but the result of social construction that can be reinterpreted according to the context of the times and social reality.

In some of his writings, KH. Husein Muhammad also points out that assumptions about male superiority have been widely refuted by historical evidence and modern social experience. He highlights how women have succeeded in taking on various important roles that were previously thought to only be done by men. This confirms that the ability to lead is not determined by gender, but by personal capacities such as competence, integrity and responsibility.

This idea is very relevant in the context of women's involvement in the PMII organization at UIN North Sumatera. In this environment, women activists appear as agents of change who contribute to strengthening solidarity, facilitating communication between members, and taking part in the organizational decision-making process. Therefore, the thought of KH. Husein Muhammad becomes a theological foundation that supports the importance of involving women equally in the spaces of student organizations in order to create an inclusive, fair, and collaborative order (Idris & Khumairoh, 2024).

Table 3. Other Members' Perceptions of Women's Roles

| Member Group | Perception of Women's Role | Attitude Toward Gender Equality |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Majority | Recognize Strategic contributions and leadership | Support equal participation |
| Minorities | Still see women as complements | Tend to be conservative |

Barriers Faced by Women Activists

One of the main barriers women face in achieving leadership positions is the stereotype that women are less suited to lead. This view is often rooted in cultural norms that assume that leadership qualities such as assertiveness, rationality and the ability to make quick decisions are more synonymous with male characteristics. As a result, women who are ambitious to lead are often faced with the prejudice that they are less capable of dealing with pressure or making firm decisions. Such stereotypes not only limit women's opportunities in strategic positions, but can also lower their confidence to pursue such positions, given unfair expectations of their abilities (Hakim, 2023). In addition to gender stereotypes, women also face great challenges in dividing their time between organizational responsibilities, academics, and family life. Most women in leadership positions also have obligations as students or professionals who must maintain their academic performance, in addition to their traditional role as housekeepers. This limited division of time often causes women to feel pinched, where they have to balance the demands that exist in various aspects of their lives. Not infrequently, this double burden becomes a significant obstacle to career achievement and leadership positions in organizations, as women must prioritize one of the roles, often sacrificing time or energy for organizational activities (Oktaviani, 2023).

Another significant barrier is the lack of structural support within organizations to facilitate women's active participation in strategic positions. Organizations often have patterns of regeneration and recruitment that favor male involvement, both in terms of access to important positions and leadership training. Without affirmative policies or mechanisms that specifically

support women, their opportunities to occupy strategic positions are limited (Subchi, 2019). In addition, the lack of female mentors or role models within organizations also makes it difficult for young women to see themselves in these positions. Without adequate structural support, women tend to feel marginalized or disrespected in decision-making processes that affect the direction of the organization. The phenomenon that occurs in organizational environments, such as PMII UIN North Sumatra, strengthens the understanding of the concept of "double burden" which is widely discussed in feminist studies. This concept refers to a condition in which women must carry two types of responsibilities simultaneously: in the domestic (private) sphere and in the public sphere, including in organizations. On the one hand, they are expected to continue to carry out their traditional roles as housekeepers or individuals responsible for family affairs; on the other hand, they are also required to be active and contribute fully in social and organizational activities (Rahayu, 2021).

In the context of student organizations, women often face this double expectation. In addition to completing academic tasks and personal responsibilities, they must also perform on par with or even better than men in order to be recognized. Although many women are already in strategic positions, the social pressure and emotional burden remains a challenge they must face. This double burden is not only physical, but also psychological, which impacts their well-being and participation in the organization. Feminist studies highlight that double burden is a form of structural injustice stemming from patriarchal culture. In this system, women's domestic work is often not formally recognized as "work", so their participation in the public sphere is considered an addition, not a right. This has an impact on the views of some organizational members who still see women as complements, not as leaders or prime movers. As a result, women have to work harder to prove their capacity in an unequal situation.

In addition to the workload, women also often have to deal with stereotypes and double standards. When they are assertive or ambitious, they are often perceived as transgressing the boundaries of "ideal" gender roles. Conversely, when they are gentle and compromising, they are seen as not strong enough to lead. This puts women in a dilemma that is not always experienced by men in the same organization. Therefore, acknowledging the double burden is not only a matter of empathy, but also important in crafting more equitable and gender-responsive organizational policies. Addressing double burden requires a comprehensive approach. Organizations must start creating spaces and mechanisms that support role balance, such as time flexibility, fair division of labor, and strengthening cross-gender solidarity. In addition, it is also important to build collective awareness that domestic and emotional work has the same value as formal contributions to the organization. Thus, women are no longer positioned as individuals who have to struggle twice, but as equal partners in the movement for change.

Gender equality is a fundamental principle that emphasizes the importance of equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for all individuals regardless of gender. This principle covers various aspects of life, including economic, educational, political and social. In its implementation, gender equality rejects all forms of discrimination and stereotypes against one gender (Tasya & Warnisyah, 2024). The goal is to create a fair, inclusive and prejudice-free environment. Gender equality also demands structural and cultural changes so that all people are treated equally in everyday life. In the context of the PMII organization at UIN North Sumatra, these values are reflected in the strategic role of women activists in building organizational cooperation and communication. This research aims to examine their contribution to improving performance among members and internalizing the value of equality in the organization.

Table 4. Barriers faced by women activists

| Types of Barriers | Brief Explanation | Impact Felt |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Gender stereotypes | Women are considered less suitable to lead | Decreased self-confidence |
| Double load | Must balance studies, family, and organization | Physical and mental fatigue |
| Lack of structural support | Lack of mentoring and affirmative policies | Leadership opportunities hindered |
| Male dominance | Gender-inclusive regeneration pattern | Lack of strategic representation |

The Influence of Women's Roles on Intermember Performance

Teams or work units led by women show a tendency to have a higher level of team cohesion. This cohesion is reflected in more harmonious relationships between members, mutual respect, and openness in conveying ideas and criticism. Women's leadership tends to be participatory and communicative, where each member feels involved in the decision-making process (Nurhasanah, 2021). This creates a sense of belonging and shared responsibility in completing the assigned tasks. In addition, coordination in teams led by women usually runs more effectively due to attention to detail and careful planning. Female leaders generally have a more structured managerial approach and are patient in dealing with internal conflicts. They focus not only on the end result, but also on a healthy and efficient work process. This approach allows team members to work more calmly and purposefully, resulting in significantly improved output quality (Putri, 2023).

Not only that, female leaders also tend to be more sensitive to the emotional dynamics within the group, which makes them quicker to respond to potential divisions or tensions between members. By creating a supportive and empathetic work atmosphere, they are able to maintain team stability, especially in the face of work pressure or challenges in organizational projects. It is this balance between assertiveness and empathy that makes women's leadership effective in building solid, conflict-resistant teams. This trend is evident in several activity units at PMII UIN North Sumatera, where teams coordinated by female cadres are able to complete work programs more consistently and on time. For example, in the implementation of cadre training, teams led by women recorded faster completion of administration and reporting and no significant internal conflicts. This finding confirms that the role of women in leadership is not just symbolic, but has a real influence on organizational dynamics and performance.

The finding that women's leadership has a positive impact on team performance is in line with various global studies that show the same (Andriani, 2020). The Catalyst report (2020), for example, states that teams led by women have a tendency to work more inclusively, adaptively, and collaboratively. Women in leadership positions more often adopt a transformative leadership style, an approach that emphasizes empathy, individual development, and active participation of all team members. This style is highly effective in building team spirit and increasing collective productivity. This is also reinforced by a McKinsey & Company (2021) study which found that companies with a higher proportion of women in top management show superior financial performance and innovation compared to those that are gender homogeneous. In the context of student organizations such as PMII, although not profit-oriented, performance indicators such as work program effectiveness, member participation, and timely completion of tasks remain relevant. Women's leadership is proven to be able to create a conducive work atmosphere, as well as increase internal accountability. Women's leadership also brings added value in terms of diversity of perspectives and decision-making. When women are given the space to lead, the discussion process becomes more open and diverse, as they tend to listen to various views before making decisions. This becomes

important in a complex organization like PMII, which manages many agendas with heterogeneous member backgrounds. Women are able to balance rational and emotional approaches, which makes organizational decisions not only logical but also humane (Catalyst, 2020; McKinsey & Company, 2021).

At PMII UIN North Sumatera, this tendency can be seen in several activities led by female cadres. For example, in the implementation of study forums and cadre training, teams coordinated by women have succeeded in creating a more collaborative and organized working atmosphere. Team members felt more heard and involved, which resulted in increased loyalty and responsibility to the tasks assigned. Communication effectiveness and team cohesion also improved significantly. With reference to this empirical evidence, organizations such as PMII should expand the strategic role of women in leadership structures. Women's participation is not only a form of gender representation, but also an investment in improving organizational quality. Institutional support for women to be involved in strategic positions will create a healthier balance and increase the competitiveness of student organizations in facing the challenges of an increasingly complex era.

Table 5. The Effect of Women's Role on Intermember Performance

| Aspects of Influence | Description of Women Activists' Contributions | Impact on Performance |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Team cohesion | Building harmonious relationships, mutual respect, and open communication between members | Increase teamwork solidarity and effectiveness |
| Participative leadership | Involve all members in the decision-making process | Increased sense of belonging, collective responsibility, and active participation |
| Response to conflict | Quickly and empathetically respond to emotional dynamics and internal conflicts | Maintain organizational stability and speed up problem solving |
| Team coordination and management | Thorough in planning and implementing organizational activities | Implementation of work programs is more focused and less error-prone |
| Emotional and moral support | Provide a safe space and moral support for members facing personal or academic pressures | Improving psychological well-being and member loyalty |
| Collaborative values | Encourage cross-gender cooperation and bridge communication between male and female members. | Establish an inclusive and supportive organizational culture. |

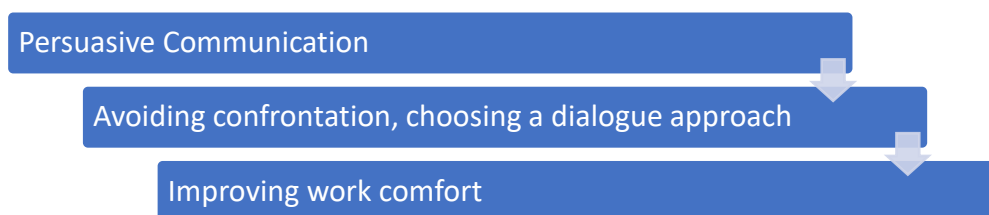
Strategies Implemented by Women Activists to Improve Performance

Women activists in PMII UIN North Sumatera demonstrate strategic capabilities in building organizational performance through persuasive approaches. They often choose non-confrontational communication methods to influence fellow members, such as through invitations to discussions, personal approaches, or providing examples in action. This strategy has proven to be effective in creating a conducive working atmosphere, as members feel valued and not pressured to receive direction. This approach also strengthens interpersonal relationships between members, which is an important foundation for teamwork. In addition, many women activists also apply the method of mentoring or informal assistance to other

members, especially to new cadres. This process is usually done through direct guidance during the implementation of activities, as well as in the form of personal consultations outside of official organizational forums. By providing constructive guidance, women activists not only transfer organizational knowledge, but also foster a sense of confidence and responsibility in other members. This approach strengthens the sustainability of the organization through healthy and purposeful regeneration.

The third strategy that stands out is the use of emotional and empathic approaches in maintaining team solidity. Women activists tend to be more sensitive to psychological dynamics in the group, so they are able to identify potential conflicts or emotional exhaustion before it becomes a big problem (Surbakti, 2021). They do not hesitate to provide moral support, build a safe space to confide in fellow members, and maintain emotional balance in teamwork. In this way, the emotional bond within the group becomes stronger, which in turn has a positive impact on overall commitment and work productivity. The strategies applied by female activists at PMII UIN North Sumatra, such as persuasive approaches, mentoring, and interpersonal empathy, reflect a participative leadership style. This style is characterized by active involvement of members in the decision-making process, fair division of responsibilities, and two-way communication between leaders and team members. In the context of student organizations, this approach not only creates a more democratic working atmosphere, but also fosters a sense of belonging to the organization collectively (Ramadhani, 2022).

Participatory leadership played by female cadres also shows the characteristics of strong empathy. They not only lead structurally, but also emotionally and socially. For example, they show concern for members' personal conditions, such as academic pressures or personal issues that can affect performance in the organization. By accommodating these emotional needs, women leaders create a more humanized workspace, which supports members' mental stability and morale. This leadership trait is widely associated with gender-based leadership, particularly those that highlight feminine values such as empathy, caring, and affective communication. Contemporary studies also suggest that female leaders tend to adopt a transformational leadership style, where the focus is not only on results, but also on the development of individuals within the team. This style has proven effective in work environments that require adaptability, collaboration, and innovation-including in values-based organizations like PMII. Furthermore, participatory and empathic women's leadership directly contributes to the formation of a more inclusive organizational culture. By opening spaces for dialogue, encouraging equality of roles, and fostering tolerance for dissent, they help to reduce the rigid hierarchies that often become barriers in student organizations. The result is a team that is more open to new ideas, more prepared to deal with internal conflicts, and more effective in completing work programs collectively. Therefore, the leadership strategies applied by women activists in PMII are not only effective at a practical level, but also reflect a paradigm shift in leadership in student organizations. It is no longer focused on domination or structural power, but on the values of dialogue, cooperation, and character building. This is proof that women have equal capacity, even superior in some aspects of leadership that have been less formally recognized.



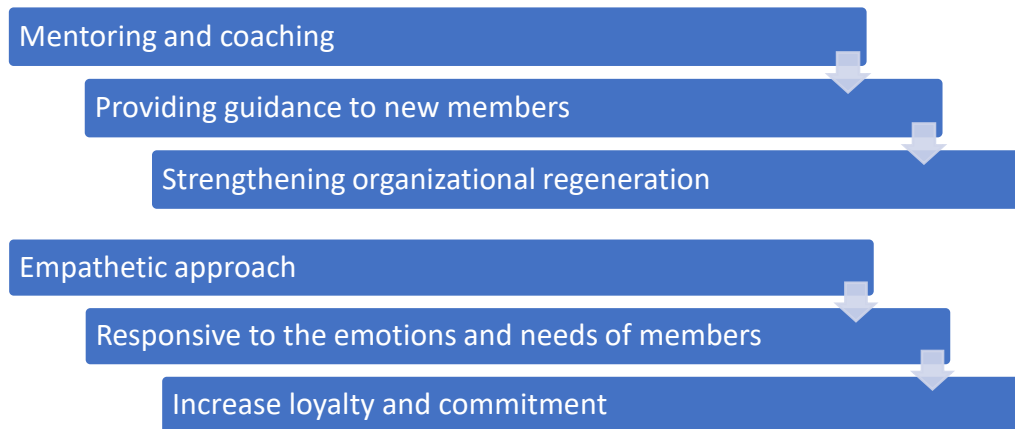


Figure 1. Strategies Applied by Women Activists to Improve Performance

Conclusion

This research reveals that women activists have a crucial contribution in improving the quality of interaction and cooperation between members of the PMII organization at UIN North Sumatra. Their role is not limited to administrative tasks, but extends to strategic areas such as organizational decision-making, internal conflict resolution, and the establishment of an inclusive work climate. Female cadres are proven to be able to become unifying agents through communicative and empathetic leadership, which has an impact on increasing collective spirit and sense of responsibility among organizational members. Furthermore, the leadership style applied by female activists shows transformational characteristics characterized by the ability to inspire and empower other members. By promoting a collaborative and dialogical approach, they encourage the active participation of each individual in running the organization. Sensitivity to social and emotional dynamics within the group is a major strength in building team cohesion, which ultimately supports work effectiveness and the achievement of overall organizational goals.

However, the existence and contribution of women in organizations still face various structural and cultural obstacles. Stereotypes that consider leadership to be the dominant domain of men and the assumption that women are less assertive in making decisions are major obstacles. In addition, the double burden faced by many women activists - academic responsibilities, domestic roles, and organizational demands - makes them vulnerable to physical and emotional exhaustion that can limit their space and leadership potential. These conditions show that recognition of women's roles is not enough without reforms in organizational structure and culture. Concrete steps are needed to create an environment that supports women's full involvement, such as affirmative policies, mentoring systems, and capacity building programs based on gender equality. Only with comprehensive changes that include institutional aspects and collective mindset, student organizations such as PMII can become a truly fair, democratic, and productive space for all its members regardless of gender.

To encourage the creation of a more inclusive and equitable organization, PMII needs to consistently conduct education and training on gender equality to build collective awareness of the importance of women's roles in the organization. In addition, the implementation of affirmative policies needs to be done to open wider access for women in leadership positions and strategic decision-making. This must be supported by the development of sustainable structural systems, such as the provision of mentors, counseling rooms, and role flexibility so that women can participate optimally. PMII also needs to have a clear and firm mechanism in preventing and handling various forms of discrimination and gender-based violence. In

addition, participatory and empathic leadership strategies that have proven effective among women activists should be socialized and used as inspirational models for all members of the organization, regardless of gender, as a step towards building a healthy, fair, and progressive organizational culture.

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