

## HOUSEHOLD HARMONY IN SALAFI FAMILIES: PERSPECTIVES OF USTADZ WIVES IN JEMBER

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### Abstract

Islam provides clear household guidelines to obtain harmony (sakinah). On the other hand, many contemporary Muslim families face dynamic challenges, particularly debates surrounding the role of wives. While previous studies have examined family harmony from various perspectives, empirical research on the lived experiences of Salafi wives remains limited. This study addresses that gap by exploring how the wives of Salafi ustadz in Jember understand and practice household harmony within the framework of Islamic teachings. Using a qualitative case study approach with purposive sampling, ten respondents were interviewed and observed. The findings reveal five key perspectives on achieving harmony: (1) choosing a religious husband; (2) possessing and applying Islamic knowledge; (3) maintaining good communication; (4) orienting toward afterlife happiness; and (5) prioritizing faith over emotional dependency. At the same time, they identified four major challenges: (1) balancing domestic and gendered responsibilities; (2) negotiating religious identity in a conflicting social environment; (3) addressing emotional and communication needs; and (4) managing economic difficulties. This study contributes to Islamic family law and gender discourse by demonstrating how Salafi wives integrate Qur'an- and Sunnah-based principles into family life while navigating modern household dynamics.

**Keywords:** Family harmony, Household, Salafi, Wives, Islamic family law

### Abstrak

Islam memberikan pedoman yang jelas untuk mencapai keharmonisan rumah tangga (sakinah). Namun, keluarga Muslim kontemporer menghadapi tantangan yang dinamis, khususnya terkait perdebatan mengenai peran istri. Sejauh ini, penelitian empiris mengenai pengalaman hidup istri ustadz Salafi dalam membangun keharmonisan rumah tangga masih terbatas. Penelitian ini berupaya mengisi kekosongan tersebut dengan mengkaji bagaimana istri ustadz Salafi di Jember memahami dan mempraktikkan keharmonisan rumah tangga berdasarkan ajaran Islam. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kasus kualitatif dengan teknik purposive sampling terhadap sepuluh responden melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan lima perspektif utama dalam mencapai keharmonisan, yaitu: (1) memilih suami yang religius; (2) memiliki serta mengamalkan ilmu agama; (3) menjaga komunikasi yang baik; (4) mengorientasikan kebahagiaan di akhirat; dan (5) memprioritaskan iman dibanding ketergantungan emosional. Di sisi lain, terdapat empat tantangan utama yang dihadapi, yakni: (1) membagi tanggung jawab domestik dan gender; (2) menegosiasikan identitas keagamaan di tengah lingkungan sosial yang berseberangan; (3) memenuhi kebutuhan emosional dan komunikasi; serta (4) menghadapi persoalan ekonomi. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada kajian hukum keluarga Islam dan gender dengan menunjukkan bagaimana istri ustadz

*Salafi mengintegrasikan prinsip Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah dalam kehidupan keluarga sekaligus menghadapi dinamika rumah tangga modern.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Keharmonisan keluarga, Rumah tangga, Salafi, Istri, Hukum keluarga Islam.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

A household harmony (*sakinah*) is a central principle in Islamic teachings, characterized by peace, affection, and mutual responsibility between husband and wife.<sup>1</sup> Both partners are entrusted with complementary roles: the husband as financial provider and protector, and the wife as caretaker of house and children.<sup>2</sup> This principle is affirmed in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical scholars such as Ibn Utsaimin, who emphasized that leadership within the family requires responsibility rather than superiority.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Islam guides that harmony can be achieved when both spouses fulfill their roles with kindness, respect, and piety.

In implementing Islamic principles to achieve family harmony, most Muslims require role models who can guide them in ensuring that their understanding and practice of religion remain consistent with Islamic teachings. If someone does not correctly get Islamic knowledge from the Quran and Sunnah, they could misinterpret it. For this reason, many Muslims look to the example of righteous predecessors or Salafis by referring to the explanations and examples of previous generations, the early generations of Muslims, which are perceived as the purest form of Islam. It is believed to possess the most accurate and comprehensive understanding of Islamic principles and teachings. This allows Muslims to draw inspiration from past scholars and ensures that their religious lives remain faithful to the truth when applying Islamic teachings as a guideline for achieving household harmony.

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Bin Muhammad Husni et al., "Problem of Domestic Violence and Its Solutions in the Light of Maqasid Shariah," *Asian Social Science* 11, no. 22 (2015): 22, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n22p33>.

<sup>2</sup> Zulkifli Reza Fahmi, "Pembagian Peran Suami Dan Istri Dalam Membangun Rumah Tangga Sakinah Menurut Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani," *Qanun: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.51825/qanun.v1i1.16>.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Al-Utsaimin, *Syarh Riyadh al-Saliheen* (Dār al-Waṭan li al-Nashr, al-Riyāḍ), 3: 150.

Despite these foundational teachings, contemporary Muslim families encounter evolving challenges. Rapid social transformation has intensified discussions on gender equality, with some critics characterizing certain aspects of Islamic family law as patriarchal.<sup>4</sup> Media narratives often portray Muslim women as subordinated, reinforcing stereotypes that undermine the Islamic concept of mutual respect in marriage. At the same time, divorce rates continue to rise in many Muslim countries, including Indonesia. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics shows that divorce cases reached over 516,000 in 2022, with East Java recording some of the highest figures nationally. This trend highlights the urgent need for strategies that strengthen family resilience and uphold Islamic values.

Jember Regency represents an important setting for this research. Despite being a predominantly Muslim area where over 98% of residents follow Islam and more than 600 Islamic boarding schools operate the region continues to record one of the highest divorce rates in East Java, exceeding 23,000 cases from 2021 to 2024. Interestingly, Jember has also become a center for the growing Salafi *manhaj* movement, marked by the rise of Salafi *pesantren* and their active alumni networks.<sup>5</sup> Families within this community claim to adhere closely to the Qur'an and Sunnah as practiced by the early generations of Muslims (*Salafus Shalih*), making them a unique group for examining how Islamic teachings are applied to sustain household harmony amid modern challenges.

Previous studies have explored household harmony from various angles. Agustina et al. in 2024 analyzed the role of mobile phone use in marital peace,<sup>6</sup> Anam and Bakar in 2024 linked Sternberg's love theory with Qur'anic views on

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<sup>4</sup> T. Saiful et al., "Gender Equality Perspective and Women Position in Islam," Atlantis Press, March 13, 2020, 197–200, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200306.212>.

<sup>5</sup> Herlina Herlina et al., "Pemberdayaan Santri dan Alumni Pondok Pesantren Melalui Wirausaha Budidaya Jamur Merang (*Volvariella Volvaceae* L.)," *E-Dimas: Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat* 11, no. 3 (2020): 274–81, <https://doi.org/10.26877/e-dimas.v11i3.3914>.

<sup>6</sup> Ria Agustina et al., "Technology and Household Harmony: A Fiqhiyah Study on the Use of Mobile Phones in Marriage," *International Journal of As Suadi: Law and Sharia Review* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.70691/assuadi.v1i1.4>.

family relations,<sup>7</sup> and Setiawan and Asnawi in 2023 studied household resilience among *Tabligh Jama'ah* families.<sup>8</sup> While these studies enrich the discourse, there remains a lack of empirical research focusing on Salafi wives' lived experiences in navigating family harmony. This gap is crucial, as wives often play a central role in shaping emotional, spiritual, and domestic stability in the household.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the perspectives of Salafi *ustadz* wives in Jember regarding the meaning and practice of household harmony. Specifically, it seeks to uncover the principles they consider essential for sustaining a harmonious household, and the challenges they face in balancing religious commitments, domestic responsibilities, and modern social pressures. By adopting a qualitative case study design with in-depth interviews and observations, this research provides insights into how Salafi wives interpret and implement Islamic values within family life. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic family law and gender by highlighting how Salafi women integrate Qur'an- and Sunnah-based principles while navigating the realities of contemporary household dynamics.

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the lived experiences of Salafi *ustadz* wives in Jember, Indonesia, in understanding and practicing household harmony. A qualitative design was chosen because it enables an in-depth exploration of social meanings, individual perspectives, and cultural contexts that cannot be captured through quantitative measures.<sup>10</sup> The

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<sup>7</sup> Hairul Anam and Abu Bakar, "Building a Harmonious Family in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Sternberg's Theory of Love on Household Harmony," *TAFSE: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.22373/tafse.v9i1.21793>.

<sup>8</sup> Agus Setiawan and Habib Shulton Asnawi Asnawi, "Khuruj Fi Sabilillah Jama'ah Tabligh: Fulfilment of Alimony, Implications for Household Harmony and Wife Psychology," *COUNS-EDU: The International Journal of Counseling and Education* 8, no. 4 (2023): 4, <https://doi.org/10.23916/0020230845940>.

<sup>9</sup> Alfa Mardiyana, "PERAN ISTRI DALAM PEMBENTUKAN KELUARGA SAKINAH MENURUT AL-QUR'AN (PERSPEKTIF TAFSIR AL-MISBAH DAN TAFSIR AL-AZHAR)," *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 5, no. 1 (2017): 79–108, <https://doi.org/10.21274/kontem.2017.5.1.79-108>.

<sup>10</sup> John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (SAGE Publications, 2017).

case study approach was appropriate given the focus on a specific community—Salafi households and the aim of generating rich, contextualized insights.

The research was conducted in Jember Regency, East Java, an area known both for its high divorce rates and for the growing presence of Salafi *pesantren* and *dakwah* activities. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, with inclusion criteria: (1) wives of Salafi *ustadz* residing in Jember, (2) married for at least two years, and (3) actively practicing Salafi teachings in family life. To enrich data collection, snowball sampling was also applied, where initial respondents referred other eligible participants.

Ten wives of Salafi *ustadz* took part in this study, representing a range of ages (20s–40s), marital durations (2–20 years), and family sizes (2–6 children). Such variation provided valuable insights into different views and experiences of household harmony and its challenges.

Data were gathered between May until August 2025 through semi-structured, in-depth interviews and non-participant observation. Each interview lasted between 50–70 minutes, conducted in a setting chosen by participants to ensure comfort and confidentiality. Guiding questions addressed perceptions of family harmony, religious practices, domestic roles, challenges, and coping strategies. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, audio-recorded with consent, and later transcribed verbatim. Observations were carried out during community events to supplement interview data and capture non-verbal interactions.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's in 2006, six-step framework: (1) familiarization with data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.<sup>11</sup> Coding was performed manually and cross-checked to ensure consistency. Themes were grouped into two main

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<sup>11</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101, <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

categories: *perspectives on household harmony* and *challenges in achieving household harmony*.

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were applied.<sup>12</sup> Triangulation was ensured by combining interviews with observations. Member checking was conducted by sharing summaries with participants to verify accuracy of interpretation. Peer debriefing with academic colleagues helped refine coding and thematic categories. Thick description was provided to allow transferability of findings, while maintaining confidentiality of participants through pseudonyms.

## **B. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The Perspective of The Wives of Salafi Ustadz on Creating Household Harmony**

A wife's role in an Islamic household is both significant and multidimensional, involving not only domestic work and raising children but also serving as a source of love, care, and emotional steadiness for the family.<sup>13</sup> The Qur'an articulates this beautifully: "And among His signs is this: He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy" (Qur'an, Ar-Rūm 30:21). Ibn Kathīr explains that this verse underscores divine mercy through companionship grounded in compassion, noting that a man stays with his wife out of love, mutual care for their children, or shared affection.<sup>14</sup> This emphasizes that the wife's contribution is far from trivial; in fact, her wholehearted support enables the husband to fulfill his external responsibilities more effectively.

Contemporary scholarship reinforces the profound impact of this role. Daharis in 2023 explores the position of women in Islamic families and finds that although Islamic law emphasizes gender equity, traditional cultural

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<sup>12</sup> Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (SAGE, 1985).

<sup>13</sup> Minhar Minhar et al., "The Role of Husband and Wife in Child Care From Islamic Law Perspectives," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC LAW AND SOCIETY* 2, no. 1 (2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.24239/ijcils.Vol2.Iss1.11>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, (Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah), 6: 278.

practices often skew its implementation, leading to marginalization of women's roles in family dynamics. This underscores the need to reassess and realign women's positions with true Islamic teachings.<sup>15</sup> For Salafi *manhaj* adherents, these dimensions take on a distinctive form. The wives of Salafi *ustadz* consciously ground household harmony in piety, religious knowledge, and steadfast faith. Their lived experiences, revealed through in-depth interviews in this study, demonstrate that maintaining a harmonious household is not merely a social expectation but a deliberate religious practice rooted in Qur'anic values, the Sunnah, and the methodology of the early Muslim generations (*Salafus Ṣāliḥ*), while also resonating with contemporary academic discussions on Islamic family law. This study identified two main thematic clusters: (1) perspectives of Salafi *ustadz* wives on creating household harmony, and (2) challenges encountered in sustaining harmony within contemporary contexts.

#### a. Choosing a Religious Husband

Islam positions the man as the head of the household, emphasizing that marital harmony begins with proper preparation before marriage most importantly through the choice of a righteous spouse. Several respondents highlighted the importance of religiosity in a husband. Kho (25), married for five years with two children, reflected: "*At first I never intended to marry a ustadz, but later I realized that only a religious husband could guide the family towards harmony.*" Similarly, Riy (married since 2017) added: "*Having a pious husband gives me confidence to trust his decisions, even when I disagree.*"

Scholarly studies confirm that religiosity plays a central role in marital stability. Abid et al. in 2025 show that piety is positively associated with conflict management and trust between spouses in Indonesian Muslim families.<sup>16</sup> International research also provides similar evidence: Jafari et al. in 2015 find

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<sup>15</sup> Ade Daharis, "The Role and Position of Women in the Family According to Islamic Law: A Critical Study of Contemporary Practices," *LITERATUS* 5, no. 2 (2023): 382–87, <https://doi.org/10.37010/lit.v5i2.1475>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibnu Abid et al., "Strategi Bimbingan Konseling Islami Dalam Membina Rumah Tangga Bagi Pasangan Muda," *Ainara Journal (Jurnal Penelitian Dan PKM Bidang Ilmu Pendidikan)* 6, no. 1 (2025): 188–96, <https://doi.org/10.54371/ainj.v6i1.807>.

that shared religious commitment enhances marital satisfaction and reduces divorce rates among Muslim couples,<sup>17</sup> while Perry in 2016 argues that having a religiously committed spouse positively impacts marital quality more for the wife than for the husband.<sup>18</sup>

b. Possessing and Applying Islamic Knowledge

Islam requires believers to continuously seek knowledge and apply it in family life, as practicing Islamic teachings forms virtuous habits and prevents negative attitudes.<sup>19</sup> Thus, household harmony can be achieved when both spouses are committed to learning and implementing Islamic principles.

Nabila (married for 20 years) emphasized: *“The main pillar in building household harmony is knowing Islamic teachings. Husbands and wives who understand and keep learning Sharia will respect each other’s rights and obligations.”* Similarly, Fari (a career woman, married for 17 years) shared that her husband, an Islamic law lecturer, embodies this principle. She explained: *“He leads with humility, respects my role as a wife, even helps with domestic matters, and never feels burdened by my work.”*

Empirical studies further support the centrality of Islamic knowledge in promoting marital harmony. Latifa et al. in 2021 found that couples who engage in continuous religious learning demonstrate higher levels of empathy, patience, and marital stability.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, Jufri in 2025 observed that santri couples, both graduates of Islamic boarding schools, can achieve harmonious family relationships through religious knowledge, experiences, and the application of

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<sup>17</sup> F Jafari et al., “Marital Satisfaction and Adherence to Religion,” *Journal of Medicine and Life* 8, no. Spec Iss 4 (2015): 214–18. PMID: 28316734; PMCID: PMC5319260.

<sup>18</sup> Samuel L. Perry, “Spouse’s Religious Commitment and Marital Quality: Clarifying the Role of Gender\*,” *Social Science Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (2016): 476–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12224>.

<sup>19</sup> Nurhadi Nurhadi, “LAW EDUCATING WIFE AND CHILDREN PRIVATE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OF PRESIDENT OF THE PROPHET OF MUHAMMAD SAW,” *Jurnal PAI Raden Fatah* 1, no. 3 (2019): 3, <https://doi.org/10.19109/pairf.v1i3.3363>.

<sup>20</sup> Rena Latifa et al., “Understanding the Relationship between Religiosity and Marital Commitment to Marital Stability: An Investigation on Indonesian Female Journalists,” *Religions* 12, no. 4 (2021): 242, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12040242>.

*kafa'ah* principles.<sup>21</sup> On a broader scale, Aman et al. in 2019 argue that religious knowledge and practice act as protective factors against marital dissatisfaction and stress in Muslim households.<sup>22</sup>

### c. Maintaining Good Communication

An encouraging familial atmosphere and positive communication strongly influence emotional and social well-being.<sup>23</sup> For Salafi *ustadz* wives, household harmony is sustained through continuous dialogue and casual conversations within the family.

Lu (a lecturer, married for 24 years) explained: “*Because we are both lecturers, we are committed to communicating casually in the afternoon or evening.*” Riy similarly shared that spontaneous conversations often became moments of problem-solving with her husband: “*Casual conversations in daily life are useful, and I often receive indirect advice for my problems.*” Hana, a mother of six, highlighted her husband’s efforts despite his busy da’wah schedule: “*Even when he travels, he always calls to ask about me and the children. That way I never feel lonely.*”

Scholarly literature further affirms that communication is a key determinant of family stability. Hilmi in 2023 argues that effective marital communication reflects the Qur’anic principle of *mu’āsharah bil ma’rūf* and contributes to long-term marital satisfaction.<sup>24</sup> International studies also highlight similar findings: according to Afifi et al. in 2018, positive spousal communication predicts greater emotional resilience in couples facing

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<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Jufri, “KAFI’AH DALAM RELASI SUAMI ISTRI SESAMA SANTRI UNTUK MEWUJUDKAN KELUARGA SAKINAH,” *Al-Hukmi: Jurnal Hukum Ekonomi Syariah Dan Keluarga Islam* 5, no. 2 (2025): 27–36, <https://doi.org/10.35316/alhukmi.v5i2.6694>.

<sup>22</sup> Jaffar Aman et al., “The Relationship of Religiosity and Marital Satisfaction: The Role of Religious Commitment and Practices on Marital Satisfaction Among Pakistani Respondents,” *Behavioral Sciences* 9, no. 3 (2019): 30, <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs9030030>.

<sup>23</sup> Melissa A. Lippold et al., “Day-to-Day Consistency in Positive Parent–Child Interactions and Youth Well-Being,” *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 25, no. 12 (2016): 3584–92, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0502-x>.

<sup>24</sup> Ismi Lathifatul Hilmi, “MU’ASYARAH BIL MA’RUF SEBAGAI ASAS PERKAWINAN (Kajian Qs. al-Nisa: 19 Dan Qs. Al-Baqarah : 228),” *Misykat Al-Anwar Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Masyarakat* 6, no. 2 (2023): 155–74, <https://doi.org/10.24853/ma.6.2.155-174>.

economic stress,<sup>25</sup> while Wafiudin and Wazis (2022) emphasize that communication mediates the relationship between religiosity and marital satisfaction among Muslim families.<sup>26</sup>

d. Living with an Orientation to the Afterlife

Family instability in the absence of clear spiritual objectives can have adverse effects on children's development. For the wives of Salafi *ustadz*, the foundation of household harmony is rooted in orienting family life toward seeking Allah's pleasure and attaining eternal happiness in the Hereafter, rather than pursuing material wealth or social status.

Yu (a businesswoman, married for 20 years) reflected: *"If you want a harmonious family, you must have a goal from the start. I married my husband because he aims for Allah's Heaven, guiding the family with faith, not desire."* Similarly, Ummu Mubarok (married for six years) emphasized: *"The family's main purpose is to please Allah by following His commands. This strengthens faith and morals, keeping the household in harmony."*

Empirical and theoretical research also supports this orientation. Bradshaw and Ellison in 2010 found that couples who establish afterlife-centered family goals experience greater patience and unity when facing financial or emotional hardship.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Akpınarlı and Eryücel in 2024 show that spiritual transcendence mediates the link between religiosity and marital satisfaction, suggesting that focusing on divine purpose fosters long-term resilience.<sup>28</sup> From a psychological perspective, Dollahite et al. in 2020

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<sup>25</sup> Tamara D. Afifi et al., "Couples' Communication About Financial Uncertainty Following the Great Recession and Its Association with Stress, Mental Health and Divorce Proneness," *Journal of Family and Economic Issues* 39, no. 2 (2018): 205–19, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-017-9560-5>.

<sup>26</sup> Ahmad Wafiudin and Kun Wazis, "Komunikasi Interpersonal Dalam Mediasi Permasalahan Pasangan Suami Istri Di Pengadilan Agama Banyuwangi," *Icon: Islamic Communication and Contemporary Media Studies* 1, no. 1 (2022): 56–70, <https://doi.org/10.35719/icon.v1i1.5>.

<sup>27</sup> Bradshaw M and Ellison Cg, "Financial Hardship and Psychological Distress: Exploring the Buffering Effects of Religion," *Social Science & Medicine* (1982) 71, no. 1 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.03.015>.

<sup>28</sup> Beyzanur Bedir Akpınarlı and Sema Eryücel, "Marital Adjustment, Spiritual Well-Being, and Locus of Control in Married Couples," *Religions* 15, no. 11 (2024): 1376, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15111376>.

argue that transcendent—such as seeking divine pleasure—helps couples reinterpret stress as part of spiritual growth rather than conflict.<sup>29</sup>

e. Choosing Faith as the Guiding Principle Over Emotional Needs

Research shows that overreliance on romantic love often leads to destructive behavior in relationships, especially when power imbalances exist<sup>30</sup>. In contrast, the wives of Salafi *ustadz* view household harmony as grounded in faith, trust, and mutual respect, with love emerging as a divine gift rather than the primary foundation.

Kho explained: “*Harmony comes from trust and respect, not from starting with love. True peace (sakinah) comes from piety toward Allah, and then love (mawaddah) will naturally grow as a blessing.*” Hana reinforced this perspective, emphasizing that divine love is ultimate: “*Sometimes women face trials, like polygamy, which we may dislike. But marriage is not only about our husband’s love; what we need most is Allah’s love.*”

Empirical studies strengthen this interpretation. Munzillah et al. in 2024 found that marriages that prioritize faith towards Allah over emotional attachment report higher marital stability.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, Tabaghdehi and Ghahderijani in 2025 note that religious commitment functions as a stabilizing force during marital conflict, reducing emotional divorce.<sup>32</sup>

In summary, the wives of Salafi *ustadz* identify five key perspectives on household harmony: (1) choosing a religious husband; (2) possessing and applying Islamic knowledge; (3) maintaining good communication; (4) orienting

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<sup>29</sup> David C. Dollahite et al., “How Relationship-Enhancing Transcendent Religious Experiences during Adversity Can Encourage Relational Meaning, Depth, Healing, and Action,” *Religions* 11, no. 10 (2020): 519, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11100519>.

<sup>30</sup> María Alonso-Ferres et al., “Elucidating the Effect of Perceived Power on Destructive Responses during Romantic Conflicts,” *The Spanish Journal of Psychology* 24 (January 2021): e21, <https://doi.org/10.1017/SJP.2021.15>.

<sup>31</sup> Indiarti Muafiqoh Munzillah et al., “Kesiapan Menikah Dalam Perspektif Psikologi Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *TSAQOFAH* 4, no. 5 (2024): 3575–88, <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v4i5.3381>.

<sup>32</sup> Alireza Faghih Tabaghdehi and Nasibeh Sheikhi Ghahderijani, “Examining the Relationship Between Psychological Abnormalities and Emotional Interactions with Emotional Divorce with the Mediating Role of Religious Beliefs in Couples with Marital Conflicts,” *Applied Family Therapy Journal* 6, no. 2 (2025): 105–15, <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.aftj.6.2.11>.

toward afterlife happiness; and (5) prioritizing faith over emotional dependency.

## 2. The Dynamics of Household Harmony According to The Wives of Salafi Ustadz and Islamic View

As a divine revelation, Islam provides an all encompassing framework for human conduct, covering areas such as family relationships and the preservation of women's honor and status. The Prophet Muhammad taught that husbands must provide for their wives, treat them kindly, and never demean or harm them (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1163). Classical scholars emphasized that fairness in Islam means giving women their due rights in accordance with their nature, such as motherhood and domestic responsibilities, while ensuring they are honored and respected. Before the advent of Islam, women were marginalized during the *Jahiliyyah* period, but Islam restored their rightful status and granted them both rights and responsibilities in a balanced way.<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, contemporary Muslim families face evolving challenges. The wives of Salafi *ustadz* demonstrate a strong commitment to upholding Islamic values in household life by following the example of the *Salafus Shalih*. Yet, this determination is not without difficulty. Their lived experiences reveal complex dynamics requiring faith, emotional strength, and social resilience. Based on the data, these challenges can be grouped into four categories: (1) balancing domestic and gendered responsibilities; (2) negotiating religious identity within conflicting social environments; (3) addressing emotional and communication needs; and (4) managing economic difficulties.

### a. Navigating Domestic and Gendered Responsibilities

The dual role of wives managing domestic affairs while engaging in public activities requires strong time management, emotional resilience, and spiritual commitment. For the wives of Salafi *ustadz*, these responsibilities are framed not merely as tasks but as acts of worship, balancing faith with modern demands.

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<sup>33</sup> Ahmad Musta'id, "The Position of Women in Islamic History," *Journal of Islamic History and Manuscript* 2, no. 1 (2023): 21-34, <https://doi.org/10.24090/jihm.v2i1.6966>.

This perspective aligns with Islamic principles that define women's roles in a balanced manner. The majority of scholars permit women to work, provided that household responsibilities are not neglected and the work environment is safe an understanding also emphasized by Shaykh Shalih al-Fauzan. Rather than seeing domestic roles as subordination, the wives interpret them as a divine mandate, aligning with the Salafi *manhaj*, which emphasizes adherence to the Qur'an, Sunnah, and consensus (*ijma*).

Moreover, Islam has historically encouraged women's advancement, particularly in education. A hadith narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari (101) and Sahih Muslim (2633) records how women approached the Prophet ﷺ to request dedicated teaching sessions, which he granted. This demonstrates that Islam promotes intellectual development for women while preserving their unique roles within the family.

#### b. Negotiating Religious Identity in a Conflicting Social Environment

Living in a morally challenging environment often creates tension between commitment to Islamic values and prevailing social standards. For the wives of Salafi *ustadz*, this pressure is felt in public opinion, social media, and cultural expectations that conflict with their religious identity.

These issues resonate with the hadith: "*Islam began as something strange, and it will revert to being strange. So, good tidings for the strangers*" (Sunan Ibn Majah, no. 3986). As-Sindi's commentary explains that holding firmly to Islam often requires enduring estrangement, just as in the Prophet's early days. For these wives, religious identity is not a burden but a divinely foretold test that must be upheld with patience and faith.

#### c. Emotional and Communication Needs

Research indicated that women generally display higher emotional responsiveness and empathy, particularly in communication and parenting<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Pratiwi Uly Romadhoni, "NEUROSCIENCE OF THE BRAIN IN FAMILY PSYCHOLOGY: GENDER AND EVERYDAY IMPLICATIONS (NEUROSAINS OTAK DALAM PSIKOLOGI KELUARGA: GENDER DAN IMPLIKASI SEHARI-HARI)," paper presented at Seminar Nasional Sanata Dharma Berbagi 2024, *Seminar Nasional Sanata Dharma Berbagi 2024*, October 2, 2024, <https://e-conf.usd.ac.id/index.php/usdb/usdb2024/paper/view/4322>.

Accordingly, wives often require greater emotional closeness in family interactions. Yet, these needs are not always fulfilled, especially when husbands are preoccupied with work or da'wah activities, creating inner tension.

These insights align with Qur'an 4:19: "*And live with them honorably.*" Ibn Kathir interprets this as treating wives kindly, speaking gently, and showing care. The Prophet ﷺ also modeled this behavior, declaring: "*The best among you is the one who is best to his family*" (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, no. 3895). At the same time, Islam encourages self-control in emotional expression, as in the hadith: "*Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent*" (al-Bukhari, 6475; Muslim, 47).

Thus, for Salafi *ustadz* wives, maintaining emotional balance does not mean suppressing feelings, but expressing them wisely within religious boundaries, safeguarding household harmony through patience, dignity, and respectful communication.

#### d. Economic Pressures on Family Stability

Economic challenges in Salafi households are not limited to financial shortages but also stem from psychological pressures amplified by social media, which often showcases luxury and idealized lifestyles.<sup>35</sup> These comparisons create emotional burdens that conflict with the principle of *qana'ah* (contentment).

Islamic teachings emphasize gratitude as a safeguard against such pressures: "*Remember Me, and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and do not be ungrateful*" (Qur'an 2:152). Ibn Kathir interprets this verse as Allah's promise of increased blessings for those who practice gratitude. However, expressing blessings must be sincere, not boastful, as explained by Ibn 'Uthaymīn.

Thus, the economic challenges of Salafi wives extend beyond material provision to resisting societal pressures that measure worth by wealth. Their testimonies affirm that household harmony is best achieved through faith,

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<sup>35</sup> Betul Keles et al., "A Systematic Review: The Influence of Social Media on Depression, Anxiety and Psychological Distress in Adolescents," *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 25, no. 1 (2020): 79–93, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590851>.

patience, and gratitude, aligning with research that highlights Islamic values—exemplified by the *Salafus Shalih*—as the foundation for family stability and happiness.<sup>36</sup>

### C. CONCLUSION

For the wives of *ustadz* who live in accordance with Islamic law, continual reference to the Qur'an and Sunnah as interpreted by the *Salafus Shalih* forms the foundation of household harmony. This study reveals that contemporary challenges such as shifting gender roles, economic pressures, and social influences are not viewed by Salafi wives as insurmountable barriers, but as tests to be met with faith, patience, and adherence to Islamic principles. Beyond personal strategies, Islam itself offers comprehensive guidance for sustaining familial harmony, encompassing matters of faith (*'aqidah*), morality (*akhlaq*), and Sharia regulations. In this context, family members are encouraged to deepen their religious understanding so that household challenges may be resolved through spiritual wisdom rather than resulting in discord.

The implications of these findings are twofold. First, at the community and policy level, there is a need to develop programs that reinforce Islamic family values, including premarital counseling, marriage education, and family guidance rooted in Qur'anic principles. Collaboration between government institutions, Islamic organizations, and *pesantren* can provide couples with practical tools to balance domestic roles, emotional needs, and financial pressures. These initiatives may contribute to reducing divorce rates and strengthening the resilience of Muslim families in Indonesia. Second, for Muslim households more broadly, the experiences of Salafi wives offer lessons on how to cultivate *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* by grounding family life in religious devotion rather than worldly comparison.

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<sup>36</sup> Alif Fikri Renaldy and Arif Ainur Rofiq, "The Implementation of Counseling Guidance Values in Households Based on the Story of Umar Bin Khattab RA in the Book Uquduljain," *Jurnal Pengabdian Nusantara* 3, no. 2 (2025): 57–61, <https://doi.org/10.32832/jpn.v3i2.84>.

For future research, several directions remain open. Quantitative studies could measure correlations between adherence to Salafi teachings and indicators of household harmony across diverse regions. Comparative research could examine how different Muslim communities negotiate modern influences such as feminism, consumerism, and social media. Moreover, psychological approaches are needed to explore the mental health and resilience of women in religious households, offering a more comprehensive picture of family well-being in contemporary Muslim societies.

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