



Reconstructing Spousal Rights and Obligations in Islamic Family Law Through a Maqasid-Based Gender Justice Approach in the Indonesian Context

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Abstract

Contemporary debates on Islamic family law increasingly highlight a critical tension between enduring hierarchical legal formulations and evolving demands for gender justice in pluralistic societies. Despite extensive reform efforts, existing frameworks often fail to translate normative equality into substantive justice, particularly in the distribution of spousal rights and obligations. This study addresses this unresolved gap by reconstructing the conceptual foundation of spousal relations in Indonesian Islamic family law through a maqasid al-shariah-based gender justice approach. Using a qualitative normative-socio-legal design, the research analyzes legal texts, scholarly discourse, and institutional practices to examine how spousal roles are constructed, legitimized, and operationalized. The findings demonstrate that the prevailing legal framework remains structurally anchored in a hierarchical paradigm that equates economic provision with authority, thereby institutionalizing asymmetrical power relations and marginalizing non-material contributions. While material welfare is relatively safeguarded, broader maqasid objectives—particularly justice, reciprocity, and human dignity—are only partially realized. Unlike prior studies that address isolated dimensions of marital inequality, this research advances a comprehensive and integrative framework that reconceptualizes spousal relations as dynamic, reciprocal, and context-sensitive. The study thus moves beyond doctrinal critique by exposing the epistemological limitations of existing interpretations and proposing a relational and substantive justice model grounded in the holistic objectives of Islamic law. This contribution not only enriches Islamic legal scholarship but also positions the study within global discussions on gender, legal reform, and ethical governance. Practically, it provides a conceptual basis for developing more equitable and context-responsive legal interpretations in contemporary Muslim societies.

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INTRODUCTION

The discourse on spousal rights and obligations in Islamic family law has long occupied a central position within both classical jurisprudence and contemporary legal scholarship. Traditionally, marital relations in Islamic law have been conceptualized through a complementary yet hierarchical framework, where the husband assumes the role of provider and authority, while the wife is associated with domestic responsibilities and obedience. This normative construction, deeply rooted in classical fiqh traditions, has shaped legal practices across Muslim societies,

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including Indonesia (Arinalhaq et al., 2026; Nashih, 2025). However, contemporary transformations in social structures, particularly the increasing participation of women in education, employment, and public life, have challenged the relevance of such rigid role-based formulations. These changes call into question whether classical interpretations remain adequate in addressing modern expectations of justice and equality. Consequently, the tension between tradition and contemporary realities has become a critical issue in the development of Islamic family law.

In the Indonesian context, this tension is particularly evident in the implementation of Islamic family law through formal legal instruments such as the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI). While these frameworks provide a formal recognition of spousal rights and obligations, empirical evidence suggests that their practical application often produces unequal outcomes. Issues related to maintenance (*nafkah*), marital authority, and post-divorce rights frequently reveal disparities that disadvantage women, especially in cases involving neglect or divorce initiated by the wife (D. S. M. R. Hakim et al., 2025; Yusoff et al., 2024). Moreover, socio-legal analyses demonstrate that power imbalances within marital relationships continue to reinforce patriarchal norms despite legal reforms (Hoque, 2026; Kobko -Odarii et al., 2025). These findings indicate that formal legal provisions alone are insufficient to ensure substantive justice. As a result, there is a growing need to critically reassess the normative foundations of spousal relations within Islamic law.

The urgency of this issue is further amplified by the evolving socio-economic roles of women in contemporary Indonesian society. Women are no longer confined to domestic spheres but actively contribute to household income and decision-making processes. In many cases, they even assume the role of primary breadwinners, thereby challenging traditional assumptions regarding gender-based responsibilities (Fisher et al., 2025; Hoque, 2026). Despite these transformations, legal interpretations often lag behind social realities, resulting in a mismatch between normative frameworks and lived experiences. This discrepancy not only undermines the effectiveness of legal institutions but also perpetuates structural inequalities within marriage. Therefore, addressing this gap is essential to ensure that Islamic family law remains relevant and responsive to contemporary conditions.

From a theoretical perspective, the need to reconstruct spousal rights and obligations is closely linked to the broader discourse on gender justice within Islamic law. Gender justice in Islam emphasizes not merely formal equality but substantive fairness, which takes into account the socio-economic and cultural contexts shaping human interactions (Fitria, 2025; Wijaya et al., 2025). This perspective challenges the assumption that hierarchical gender roles are inherently normative and instead advocates for interpretations that promote reciprocity and mutual responsibility. Furthermore, the concept of justice in Islamic law is intrinsically connected to its higher objectives, or *maqasid al-shariah*, which prioritize the protection of dignity, welfare, and human well-being (Ashafa & Raimi, 2025; Mubarak et al., 2022). Thus, integrating gender justice within Islamic legal reasoning is not an external imposition but a necessary realization of its ethical foundations.

Recent scholarly works have attempted to address these challenges by incorporating gender-sensitive and *maqasid*-based approaches into the study of Islamic family law. For instance, (Asnawi & Rahayu, 2026) propose the concept of *mubadalah*, which emphasizes reciprocity and partnership in marital relations. Similarly, Ibrahim et al., (2025) highlights the importance of aligning gender equality with *maqasid al-shariah* to achieve substantive justice. Studies by Busriyanti et al., (2025); I. A. Hakim & Ahmad, (2026) demonstrate that *maqasid*-based analysis can strengthen legal protection for women, particularly in cases of domestic violence. Other research has examined specific issues such as maintenance disparities (Zakyyah & Ridwansyah, 2024), post-divorce rights (Maghfiroh & Faizah, 2024), and reinterpretations of guardianship (Umar & Syarif, 2025). Additionally, contemporary discussions have explored the role of legal institutions in promoting gender justice (Laila Azizah & Anwar Hafidzi, 2025) and the integration of Islamic law with modern legal systems (Fiteriana, 2023). Collectively, these studies indicate a growing scholarly interest in rethinking the normative framework of spousal relations.

Despite these contributions, the existing literature remains fragmented and limited in scope. Many studies focus on isolated aspects of spousal relations, such as maintenance or divorce, without offering a comprehensive reconstruction of the overall framework governing marital rights and obligations. Furthermore, while *maqasid al-shariah* is frequently invoked as a theoretical foundation, its application often lacks methodological clarity and fails to produce a systematic model for legal

reform (Ahmed, 2025). In addition, previous research tends to emphasize normative analysis without sufficiently integrating socio-legal perspectives, thereby overlooking the complexity of real-life marital dynamics. This creates a significant research gap, particularly in developing an integrative approach that combines normative, sociological, and philosophical dimensions of Islamic family law. Addressing this gap is crucial for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical implementation.

This study aims to reconstruct the framework of spousal rights and obligations in Indonesian Islamic family law through a maqasid-based gender justice approach. It seeks to develop a relational and substantive justice model that redefines marital roles as dynamic, reciprocal, and context-sensitive. Theoretically, this research contributes to the enrichment of Islamic legal scholarship by offering an integrative framework that bridges classical doctrines with contemporary demands for justice. Practically, it provides a conceptual basis for policymakers, legal practitioners, and religious courts in formulating more equitable legal interpretations and decisions. By aligning maqasid al-shariah with gender justice principles, this study aspires to promote a more responsive and humane legal system capable of addressing the complexities of modern marital relations. Ultimately, this research positions Islamic family law as a dynamic and evolving system that remains faithful to its ethical foundations while adapting to changing social realities.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in a normative–socio-legal approach, aiming to reconstruct the framework of spousal rights and obligations in Islamic family law through a maqasid al-shariah-based gender justice perspective. A qualitative approach is selected because the research seeks to interpret legal norms, examine socio-cultural dynamics, and develop a conceptual model rather than test statistical relationships. The normative dimension enables a systematic analysis of classical fiqh doctrines, statutory regulations, and contemporary Islamic legal interpretations, while the socio-legal perspective contextualizes these norms within real social practices and institutional applications (Azmi et al., 2025; Husnain, 2025). This combination is essential to uncover the gap between formal legal provisions and substantive justice outcomes. Furthermore, the study is interdisciplinary in nature, integrating legal theory, sociology, and Islamic jurisprudence to provide a holistic analytical lens (Sayuti Ismail & Inayatillah, 2026)

The research is situated within the Indonesian legal and socio-cultural context, particularly focusing on the application of Islamic family law as reflected in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), national marriage regulations, and judicial practices in religious courts. The temporal scope of the study spans from 2021 to 2026, ensuring that the analysis captures recent scholarly developments and contemporary socio-legal debates on gender justice and maqasid al-shariah. Indonesia is selected as a case study due to its pluralistic legal system, where Islamic law interacts with state law and local customs, creating a dynamic environment for examining legal reform and reinterpretation.

The unit of analysis in this study consists of legal texts, scholarly works, and documented judicial practices related to spousal rights and obligations. Data are derived from secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, legal documents, and relevant case-based studies. A total of approximately 40–60 sources are systematically selected using purposive sampling, based on criteria such as thematic relevance, methodological rigor, recency (primarily within the last five years), and academic credibility. Sources that do not directly address Islamic family law, gender justice, or maqasid al-shariah are excluded to maintain analytical focus. This sampling strategy ensures that the data corpus is both comprehensive and aligned with the research objectives.

The primary research instrument is a structured document analysis framework developed from key theoretical constructs of maqasid al-shariah and gender justice. The framework consists of analytical dimensions including: (1) normative construction of spousal roles, (2) distribution of rights and obligations, (3) indicators of gender asymmetry, and (4) alignment with maqasid objectives, particularly justice (*‘adl*), welfare (*maslahah*), and the protection of human dignity (*hifz al-‘ird*). These dimensions are derived from contemporary Islamic legal scholarship and gender studies (Hafidz, 2023; Arminsyah, 2025). The framework functions as a coding guide that enables

systematic classification and interpretation of textual data, ensuring consistency and theoretical coherence throughout the analysis.

To ensure methodological rigor, the study applies multiple strategies to establish validity and reliability. Content validity is achieved by grounding the analytical framework in well-established theoretical perspectives and recent scholarly discourse. The framework is further refined through expert judgment, involving independent review by scholars in Islamic law and gender studies to assess the relevance and clarity of the analytical indicators. Reliability is strengthened through iterative coding procedures and peer debriefing, where interpretations are revisited and cross-checked to minimize subjectivity and enhance consistency. These strategies enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings.

Data collection is conducted through a systematic library research procedure consisting of three stages. First, relevant literature is identified and retrieved from academic databases, including Scopus-indexed journals, Google Scholar, and legal repositories. Second, the collected data are screened and organized based on thematic relevance to the research focus. Third, key information is extracted and documented, including theoretical arguments, empirical findings, and legal interpretations related to spousal rights, gender justice, and maqasid-based analysis. This structured procedure ensures transparency and replicability in the data collection process.

Data analysis is carried out using a descriptive-analytical and interpretative approach, guided by a maqasid-based analytical framework. The process begins with data reduction, where relevant information is selected and organized into predefined analytical categories. This is followed by coding and categorization, in which patterns of legal reasoning, gender relations, and normative assumptions are identified. Subsequently, thematic analysis is employed to construct broader conceptual themes, such as hierarchical versus relational models of marital relations. In the final stage, an interpretative synthesis is conducted, where findings are evaluated through the lens of maqasid al-shariah to assess their alignment with principles of justice, welfare, and human dignity (Hussain & Ahmed, 2025). This process leads to the development of a reconstructed model of spousal rights and obligations that integrates normative and contextual dimensions.

The overall research design and analytical procedure are illustrated in Figure 1, which presents the sequential stages of the study from problem identification to model reconstruction.

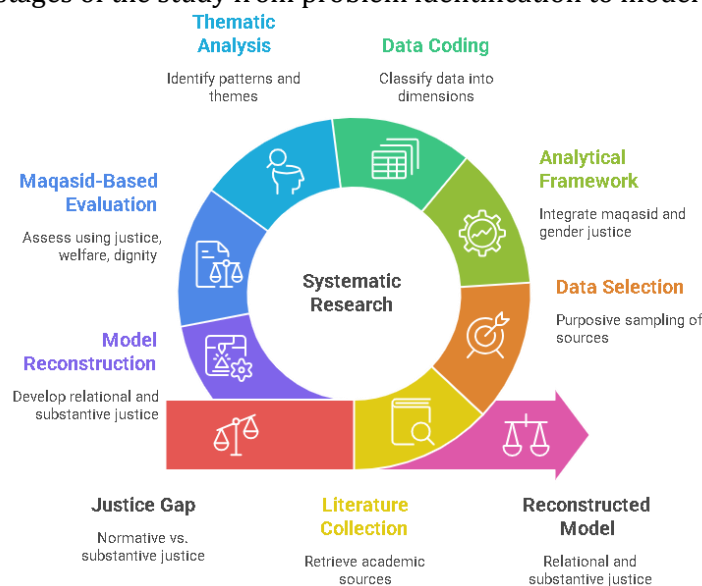


Figure 1. Research Design and Analytical Procedure of the Study

Ethical considerations are rigorously maintained throughout the research process. Although the study relies on secondary data, it adheres to principles of academic integrity, transparency, and proper attribution. All sources are accurately cited to avoid plagiarism, and interpretations are presented objectively without distortion of original authors' perspectives. In addition, the study maintains neutrality in addressing sensitive issues related to gender and religion, ensuring that the analysis remains scholarly, respectful, and balanced. These ethical standards ensure that the research meets international expectations for academic responsibility and credibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study demonstrate that the normative construction of spousal rights and obligations within Islamic family law is systematically embedded within a hierarchical legal paradigm, which structurally privileges male authority while constraining female agency. This pattern is consistently identified across classical jurisprudential texts, contemporary statutory frameworks, and interpretative practices in religious courts. The analysis reveals that the allocation of economic responsibility to husbands is frequently used as the primary justification for granting decision-making authority, thereby creating a functional linkage between financial provision and power distribution. However, this linkage does not operate symmetrically, as the corresponding domestic and emotional labor undertaken by wives is neither equally valued nor institutionally recognized. Evidence drawn from documented judicial reasoning further indicates that courts often reinforce these hierarchical assumptions, particularly in cases involving disputes over maintenance and marital obedience. In several instances, judicial interpretations prioritize formal compliance with normative roles over contextual considerations of fairness and mutual consent. This reinforces the persistence of structural asymmetry, even in cases where socio-economic conditions have significantly evolved. Consequently, the findings confirm the existence of a critical disjunction between formal legal equality and substantive justice, which constitutes the central empirical problem addressed in this study.

To systematically examine this structural imbalance, the study develops an analytical categorization of spousal relations across four key dimensions, namely economic responsibility, domestic roles, decision-making authority, and legal accountability. The results indicate that economic responsibility is disproportionately assigned to the husband, thereby legitimizing a centralized authority structure within the household. At the same time, domestic roles are overwhelmingly feminized, with expectations that women assume primary responsibility for household management and caregiving. This division of labor is not merely functional but carries normative implications that shape perceptions of gender roles and legitimacy. In terms of decision-making, the findings reveal a dominant pattern of unilateral authority, where husbands are positioned as primary decision-makers in both private and public spheres. Legal accountability further reflects this asymmetry, as women are more frequently subjected to moral scrutiny and legal consequences in cases of perceived non-compliance. This imbalance is particularly evident in disputes related to marital duties, where the burden of proof and ethical expectations tend to be disproportionately imposed on women. The integration of these dimensions provides a comprehensive mapping of how gender asymmetry is structurally reproduced within the legal framework. These findings are synthesized in Table 1.

Table 1. Analytical Mapping of Gendered Distribution in Spousal Rights and Obligations

Dimension	Normative Allocation	Practical Implication	Justice Evaluation (Maqasid Perspective)
Economic Responsibility	Husband as sole provider	Centralized authority	Partial (material welfare achieved)
Domestic Roles	Wife as primary caretaker	Limited public participation	Weak (limits human dignity)
Decision-Making	Husband as dominant authority	Reduced female agency	Weak (violates balance and fairness)
Legal Accountability	Stricter moral burden on wife	Unequal enforcement	Weak (asymmetrical justice)

Table 1 reveals that the distribution of roles is not only differentiated but also systematically hierarchical, with direct implications for the realization of justice within marital relations. The concentration of economic authority in the hands of husbands reinforces a power structure that extends beyond financial matters into broader domains of decision-making. Meanwhile, the confinement of women to domestic roles restricts their participation in social and economic life, thereby limiting their autonomy and agency. The evaluation based on maqasid al-shariah further

demonstrates that while certain aspects of welfare are achieved, particularly in terms of material provision, other essential dimensions of justice remain under-realized. Specifically, the principles of fairness (‘adl) and human dignity (hifz al-‘ird) are compromised by the persistence of hierarchical role distribution. This suggests that the current legal framework fulfills only a partial realization of maqasid objectives. The findings also indicate that these patterns are not inherent to Islamic law itself but are the result of specific interpretative traditions that prioritize stability over equity. As such, they remain open to critical reinterpretation and reform. The table therefore functions not only as a descriptive tool but also as an analytical instrument for identifying structural gaps in the realization of justice.

Building upon this structural mapping, the study identifies two competing conceptual models that shape the understanding of spousal relations, namely the hierarchical model and the relational model. The hierarchical model is characterized by rigid role differentiation, authority centralization, and a vertical structure of power relations. In contrast, the relational model emphasizes reciprocity, shared responsibility, and horizontal interaction between spouses. The findings indicate that while the hierarchical model remains dominant in formal legal texts and institutional practices, there is a growing shift in scholarly discourse toward the relational paradigm. This shift is driven by contemporary interpretations of maqasid al-shariah that prioritize substantive justice over formalistic compliance. The relational model is particularly significant because it reframes marital relations as a partnership rather than a structure of command and obedience. However, the transition between these two models is not yet fully institutionalized, resulting in a coexistence of conflicting paradigms within the legal system. This tension creates both challenges and opportunities for legal reform. The contrast between these models is illustrated in Figure 2.

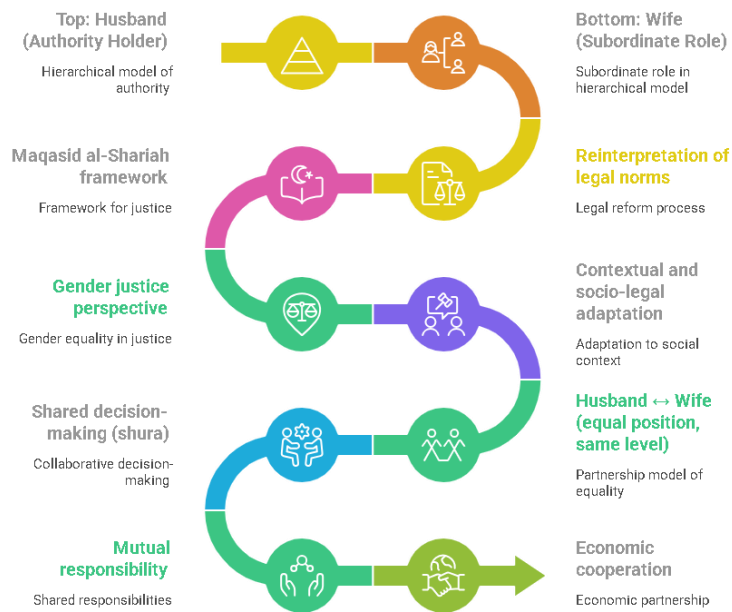


Figure 2. Comparative Conceptual Models of Spousal Relations

Figure 2 illustrates the fundamental divergence between hierarchical and relational approaches to spousal relations. The hierarchical model is depicted as a top-down structure, where authority flows unidirectionally from husband to wife, reflecting a vertical and asymmetrical power dynamic. In contrast, the relational model is represented as a horizontal and interactive system, emphasizing mutual respect, shared decision-making, and balanced responsibilities. This visual representation highlights how the relational model aligns more closely with maqasid principles, particularly those related to justice, welfare, and human dignity. The figure also serves to clarify the conceptual shift proposed by this study, moving from a static interpretation of roles toward a dynamic and context-sensitive framework. By juxtaposing these models, the study provides a clear basis for evaluating the adequacy of existing legal norms. The diagram reinforces the argument that hierarchical structures are not the only possible interpretation of Islamic family law. It also

demonstrates that alternative models can be both theoretically grounded and practically viable. As such, Figure 2 plays a central role in articulating the study's conceptual contribution.

The maqasid-based evaluation further reveals that the current implementation of spousal rights and obligations only partially fulfills the overarching objectives of Islamic law. While the principle of economic welfare (*hifz al-mal*) is relatively well addressed through the obligation of financial provision, other dimensions such as justice (*'adl*) and human dignity (*hifz al-'ird*) are not adequately realized. The hierarchical distribution of roles often results in unequal access to decision-making and limited recognition of women's contributions beyond the domestic sphere. This imbalance undermines the principle of justice as equilibrium and fairness, which is central to maqasid al-shariah. Furthermore, the narrow interpretation of welfare as purely material neglects the broader concept of holistic well-being, including emotional, social, and intellectual dimensions. The findings suggest that a more expansive understanding of maqasid is necessary to fully capture the ethical spirit of Islamic law. By applying this evaluative lens, the study exposes the limitations of existing legal interpretations. It also highlights the transformative potential of maqasid as a framework for reform. This evaluation provides a normative foundation for reconstructing a more balanced model of spousal relations.

Finally, the study proposes a relational and substantive justice model as a reconstructed framework for understanding spousal rights and obligations in contemporary contexts. This model integrates normative principles with socio-cultural realities, emphasizing flexibility, mutual agreement, and contextual interpretation. Unlike the hierarchical model, it does not assign fixed roles based on gender but allows for dynamic negotiation between spouses. The model is grounded in maqasid principles, ensuring that legal norms promote justice, welfare, and human dignity in a holistic sense. The findings indicate that such a model is both theoretically consistent with Islamic legal objectives and practically relevant in addressing contemporary challenges. It also provides a framework for reinterpreting existing laws without undermining their foundational values. By shifting the focus from authority to partnership, the model offers a more inclusive and equitable approach to marital relations. This reconstruction represents the primary contribution of the study. It establishes a new direction for future research and legal reform grounded in both tradition and transformation.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the prevailing construction of spousal rights and obligations in Indonesian Islamic family law remains deeply embedded in a hierarchical legal logic that connects economic provision with authority. This pattern is significant because it shows that legal inequality is not produced only by explicit discrimination, but also by an interpretive structure that normalizes asymmetrical power relations under the language of complementarity. In conceptual terms, the study confirms that formal role differentiation may function as a mechanism of domination when it is detached from the broader objectives of justice and reciprocity. This result supports earlier observations that patriarchal legal arrangements often persist despite reformist discourse, particularly when legal norms continue to privilege husbands as providers and decision-makers while assigning wives to obedience-based domestic roles (Arinalhaq et al., 2026; Nashih, 2025; Hoque, 2026). It also resonates with findings showing that legal recognition alone does not necessarily produce substantive justice when institutional practice remains structurally biased (D. S. M. R. Hakim et al., 2025; Yusoff et al., 2024). However, this study goes further by demonstrating that the problem is not merely the unequal application of rules, but the epistemological foundation of the rules themselves. The implication is that legal reform requires not only procedural adjustment but also a reconstruction of the conceptual assumptions through which marital relations are defined.

A second major finding concerns the unequal distribution across the four dimensions identified in this study, namely economic responsibility, domestic roles, decision-making authority, and legal accountability. The significance of this pattern lies in the fact that asymmetry operates as an integrated system rather than as an isolated legal imbalance. When economic provision is treated as the basis of authority, domestic labor becomes symbolically and legally devalued, even though it remains indispensable to family survival and social reproduction. This finding reinforces gender justice arguments that fairness in Islamic law cannot be reduced to formal equivalence, but must be assessed in relation to how value, burden, and moral recognition are distributed within lived marital

arrangements (Fitria, 2025; Wijaya et al., 2025). It is also consistent with studies on maintenance disparities and post-divorce rights showing that women frequently bear intensified legal and moral burdens without proportional institutional protection (Zakyyah & Ridwansyah, 2024; Maghfiroh & Faizah, 2024). At the same time, the present study expands the literature by showing that unequal accountability is not accidental, but structurally linked to the same hierarchy that frames husbands as normative authorities. In this sense, the legal system does not merely reflect social inequality but actively reproduces it through selective recognition of whose contributions count as rights-generating. The broader implication is that gender asymmetry in Islamic family law should be understood as a systemic configuration of power rather than a collection of disconnected doctrinal issues.

The study further demonstrates that the dominant hierarchical model is increasingly challenged by the emergence of a relational model grounded in reciprocity, shared responsibility, and contextual negotiation. This is an important conceptual finding because it suggests that Islamic family law is not trapped in a single interpretive tradition, but remains open to normative development from within its own ethical resources. The relational model supports the view that marital justice should be understood as partnership rather than command, thereby repositioning spouses as co-subjects of moral and legal responsibility. This result aligns with contemporary scholarship on *mubadalah* and reciprocity-based readings of Islamic family relations, which argue that mutuality offers a more coherent ethical basis for marital interaction than unilateral authority (Asnawi & Rahayu, 2026). It also corresponds with studies emphasizing that *maqasid al-shariah* can serve as an internal foundation for more egalitarian legal interpretations rather than as an external modernist imposition (Ibrahim et al., 2025; Ashafa & Raimi, 2025). Yet the present study adds a critical dimension by showing that the relational model has not yet displaced the hierarchical one institutionally, producing a coexistence of competing paradigms within the legal field. This coexistence helps explain why reformist discourse has often failed to generate transformative outcomes in practice. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in framing legal pluralism within Islamic family law not simply as variation in interpretation, but as a struggle between two competing normative architectures of marriage.

Another important finding is that the current legal framework realizes *maqasid al-shariah* only partially, with material welfare receiving stronger protection than justice, dignity, and reciprocity. This finding is theoretically important because it exposes a reductionist interpretation of *maqasid* that privileges economic maintenance while neglecting relational and dignitarian dimensions of human flourishing. In other words, the law appears to protect marriage as an economic arrangement more effectively than as an ethical partnership. This supports the argument that *maqasid* must be interpreted holistically, not selectively, if it is to function as a genuine framework for legal evaluation and reform (Mubarak et al., 2022; Hussain & Ahmed, 2025). The result is also in line with studies showing that *maqasid*-based analysis becomes transformative only when it is connected to substantive justice rather than confined to procedural or doctrinal justification (Ahmed, 2025; Busriyanti et al., 2025). At the same time, the present study advances the literature by specifying how a narrow reading of welfare can inadvertently legitimize hierarchy when material provision is treated as the primary indicator of marital justice. This means that *hifz al-mal* cannot be allowed to overshadow *'adl* and *hifz al-'ird* within family law interpretation. The implication is that *maqasid* should operate not as a rhetorical supplement to existing law, but as a critical evaluative tool capable of exposing normative distortions within established legal frameworks.

The findings also show that the persistence of hierarchical interpretations is closely tied to contextual factors in the Indonesian setting, particularly the interaction between legal codification, judicial reasoning, and enduring patriarchal social expectations. This contextual dimension is essential because it explains why doctrinal revision alone may be insufficient to generate substantive change. Even when reform-oriented ideas circulate in academic and policy discourse, institutional actors may continue to apply norms through inherited assumptions about authority, obedience, and gendered family roles. This observation confirms socio-legal analyses suggesting that legal outcomes are shaped as much by interpretive culture and institutional habit as by textual norms themselves (Kobko-Odarri et al., 2025; Laila Azizah & Anwar Hafidzi, 2025). It also helps explain why women's expanding participation in education, work, and household provision has not automatically translated into equal legal recognition, despite substantial social transformation (Fisher et al., 2025;

Hoque, 2026). Compared with previous studies, this research provides a more integrated account of how legal hierarchy is sustained through the convergence of doctrinal inheritance and socio-institutional practice. An alternative explanation might suggest that role differentiation merely reflects practical family organization, but the present findings challenge that view by showing that differentiation becomes unjust when authority and accountability are distributed asymmetrically. Thus, the contextual contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that Indonesian Islamic family law must be read as a living legal field in which text, institution, and social norm mutually reinforce gendered inequality.

A further contribution of this study is its implicit critique of fragmented approaches in the existing literature. Much previous research has examined single issues such as maintenance, guardianship, domestic violence, or post-divorce rights, but has not sufficiently explained how these issues are linked by a deeper normative structure. By contrast, this study shows that these legal problems are interconnected manifestations of the same hierarchical paradigm governing marital relations. This integrative perspective supports prior calls for broader reconstruction within Islamic family law, especially those arguing that piecemeal reform cannot adequately address systemic injustice (Umar & Syarif, 2025; Fiteriana, 2023). At the same time, it extends those discussions by offering a more explicit conceptual bridge between gender justice theory, maqasid reasoning, and socio-legal analysis. The theoretical implication is that substantive justice in marriage should not be pursued through isolated doctrinal correction alone, but through a redefinition of the legal philosophy underlying spousal rights and obligations. This is where the present study fills an important gap identified in earlier scholarship that criticized the methodological vagueness of maqasid-based legal reform (Ahmed, 2025). By clarifying the relation between justice, dignity, reciprocity, and contextual legal interpretation, this research provides a stronger analytical foundation for future theoretical and jurisprudential development. In that sense, its novelty lies not only in criticizing hierarchy, but in proposing an integrated interpretive architecture capable of replacing it.

Finally, the relational and substantive justice model proposed in this study represents a significant conceptual and practical intervention in the global literature on Islamic legal reform. Its value lies in demonstrating that gender-just marital relations can be grounded within the internal objectives of Islamic law without abandoning the normative tradition itself. Rather than opposing Islamic legal reasoning and contemporary equality claims, the model shows that reciprocity, shared decision-making, and context-sensitive role negotiation can emerge from a more faithful engagement with maqasid al-shariah. This finding supports reform-oriented scholarship that views Islamic law as dynamic and ethically purposive, while also advancing the debate by framing partnership as the core principle of marital justice in contemporary Muslim societies (Asnawi & Rahayu, 2026; Ibrahim et al., 2025; I. A. Hakim & Ahmad, 2026). Practically, the model offers a conceptual basis for judges, legal scholars, and policymakers to reinterpret spousal obligations in ways that are more responsive to present-day family realities. Its broader contribution is therefore twofold, namely to shift the theoretical debate from formal role allocation to substantive ethical evaluation, and to reposition Indonesian Islamic family law within wider global conversations on gender, legal pluralism, and justice. Ultimately, this study argues that the future legitimacy of Islamic family law depends not on preserving hierarchical continuity, but on its capacity to realize the moral aims of justice, dignity, and mutual responsibility in lived marital life.

Kalau Anda ingin, saya bisa lanjutkan dengan versi Discussion yang lebih tajam lagi untuk level Scopus/Q1, dengan penguatan transisi antarparagraf, pemadatan sitasi, dan penyesuaian penuh agar menyatu dengan gaya abstract, introduction, dan conclusion Anda.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the prevailing framework of spousal rights and obligations in Indonesian Islamic family law remains structurally anchored in a hierarchical paradigm that inadequately reflects contemporary socio-legal realities. The findings reveal that such a framework systematically privileges male authority through the institutional linkage between economic provision and decision-making power, while simultaneously marginalizing the legal recognition of women's multidimensional contributions. This imbalance exposes a critical disjunction between

formal legal arrangements and the substantive realization of justice, particularly in relation to equality, reciprocity, and human dignity. By applying a maqasid al-shariah-based evaluative lens, the study further establishes that the current legal construction fulfills only a partial realization of Islamic ethical objectives, as it prioritizes material welfare while underestimating relational and dignitarian dimensions of justice. Consequently, the persistence of hierarchical assumptions is not merely a doctrinal issue but reflects a deeper epistemological limitation in how Islamic family law has been interpreted and operationalized.

Building upon this critique, the study advances a relational and substantive justice model that redefines spousal relations as dynamic, reciprocal, and context-sensitive rather than fixed and hierarchical. This model represents a significant theoretical contribution by demonstrating that gender justice can be coherently grounded within the internal objectives of maqasid al-shariah, thereby bridging the perceived divide between tradition and contemporary demands for equality. Unlike prior studies that address specific legal issues in isolation, this research offers an integrative framework capable of guiding holistic legal reform, judicial interpretation, and policy development. From a practical perspective, the findings provide critical insights for legal practitioners, policymakers, and religious courts in designing more equitable and context-responsive legal interpretations. At the global level, this study contributes to broader debates on Islamic legal reform, gender justice, and legal pluralism by offering a paradigm-shifting perspective that moves beyond formal compliance toward substantive ethical realization. Ultimately, this research affirms that the future of Islamic family law lies not in preserving static interpretations, but in advancing principled reinterpretations that remain faithful to its normative foundations while responsive to evolving human realities.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Rina Septiani conceptualized the study, developed the research framework, and led the overall research design. She was responsible for coordinating the data collection process, conducting the primary analysis, and drafting the initial manuscript. Muhammad Saleh contributed to the theoretical development and refinement of the maqasid al-shariah framework and supported the interpretation of the findings within the context of Islamic legal studies. Khurul Anam was involved in data analysis, literature integration, and provided critical input in aligning the socio-legal perspective with the research objectives. La Hanuddin contributed to the validation of the analytical framework and assisted in ensuring the methodological rigor of the study. Yeyen Subandi supported the literature review process, particularly in synthesizing recent scholarly works related to gender justice and Islamic family law. Karimuddin Abdullah Lawang contributed to the critical revision of the manuscript, strengthening the argumentative structure, and ensuring the academic coherence and intellectual depth of the discussion. All authors reviewed, approved, and agreed on the final version of the manuscript.

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