

## Dilematics of Domestic Husbands in Marriage in Singapore (Maqashid Sharia Perspective)

Muhammad Syukri Albani Nasution<sup>1</sup>, Siti Khadijah Binte Mahfuh<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indoneisa  
 syukrialbani@uinsu.ac.id

Received: 15-01-2024

Revised: 11-06-2024

Received: 06-12-2024

### Abstract

This study examines the phenomenon of domestic husbands in marriage in Singapore using the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, to understand the dilemma of the role of husbands in modern families. The main objective of this study is to explore the reasons behind the change in the role of the husband, who was previously the main breadwinner, to be the husband of the household, as well as how this relates to Islamic principles that emphasize family welfare. Through a quantitative and qualitative approach, this study analyzed interviews with several part-time and full-time working domestic husbands, as well as a survey that explored the social, economic, and cultural factors that influence these changes. The results of the study show that the role of the husband in the household not only includes financial responsibility, but also social, emotional, and spiritual aspects in shaping family well-being. In the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the husband's responsibility is more than just financial support, but also includes the maintenance and protection of the family in various dimensions of life. This study provides new insights into understanding the role of domestic husbands in the context of modern families in Singapore, as well as the relevance of the application of *maqasid al-shari'ah* in the face of evolving social dynamics.

**Keywords: Gender Role, Family Welfare, Household Husband, Maqasid Sharia, Singapore.**



© In 2024, Muhammad Syukri Albani Nasution, Siti Khadijah Binte Mahfuh

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike International License 4.0.

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of domestic husbands in Singapore shows a change in the social structure and the division of roles in the family. (Ardiansyah, Putra, and Widia 2023) According to a report by Singapore's Ministry of Manpower in 2017, there were about 1,500 housewives, an increase of 700 people in the previous decade. (Amrullah 2018) Although this number is relatively small, this phenomenon indicates that some husbands feel the need to be at home to take care of the family. This phenomenon is also in line with the "Dads for Life" campaign which aims to promote a more active role of fathers in family life, an effort that emphasizes more gender equality and a more flexible division of roles. (Udasmoro 2018)

According to sociologists, including Badurddin, the increase in husbands choosing to act as housekeepers reflects a change in attitudes towards gender equality and a more flexible division of roles in the family. (Badrudin, n.d.) Women now have the opportunity to work and earn equal to or greater than their husbands, which encourages some husbands to be more involved in domestic tasks, such as taking care of children and household chores. (Sari and Anton 2020)

However, questions arise regarding how a husband who acts as a housekeeper can fulfill his maintenance obligations to his wife, especially in the Islamic view. This is because in Islamic teachings, the husband has the obligation to provide sustenance, food, and clothing to his wife, as stated in Qs. Al-Baqarah [2]: 233 and Qs. An-Nisaa' [4]: 34. Research by Al-Qurtubi (2006) and Ibn Taymiyyah (2001) also affirms the husband's obligation to provide for his wife's livelihood, but does not explain in detail the flexibility of the division of roles in the modern family as happens to domestic husbands. (Shofyan, n.d.) This raises new questions about the extent to which Islamic teachings can accommodate social changes such as the phenomenon of domestic husbands.

Several previous studies have discussed the division of roles in the family, especially in the context of the role of husband and wife in the household. Siti Aisyah (2014) in her research examining the changing roles of husband and wife in Muslim families in Indonesia, showed that gender equality in the division of domestic duties can improve the quality of relationships in the family. However, the study focuses more on the role of wives in working outside the home, without much review of how husbands who act as households fulfill their maintenance obligations from a sharia perspective.

Research by Hassan (2019) in Malaysia on domestic husbands also revealed that the role of husbands in more domestic households sometimes receives negative stigma, although on the other hand, this role increases family harmony. However, this study does not touch on the question of how this role can be accounted for in Islamic law, especially in relation to the maintenance obligations that must be fulfilled by the husband.

On the other hand, Basmah Al-Saadi (2020) in his study on the adaptation of gender roles in modern society suggests that Islamic law can be adapted to the needs of contemporary families, but he also points out that the understanding and interpretation of sharia texts need to be considered in a dynamic social context.

This research offers novelty in studying the phenomenon of domestic husbands in Singapore using the perspective of Maqashid Sharia. This novelty lies in the emphasis on the analysis of how the changing roles in the family, especially the phenomenon of the domestic husband, can be integrated with the principles of Maqashid Sharia, which include the goal of protecting the welfare of the family (*hifz al-nasl*) and ensuring the benefit of all family members.

This study will also examine the relevance of the application of Islamic law in the context of the modern family, especially related to the husband's maintenance obligations towards his wife and children, although the traditional role of the husband as a breadwinner has changed. So far, the study of domestic husbands in the sharia perspective is still very limited, so this research is expected to make a new contribution by presenting a more holistic analysis of how Islamic law can accommodate flexible roles in the modern family without ignoring the basic obligations of the husband in fulfilling his livelihood and responsibilities.

In addition, the focus of this research will also look at how the phenomenon of domestic husbands can be influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors in Singapore that drive changes in gender roles in the family, as well as their impact on family well-being and harmonization. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its deep understanding of the interaction between the domestic role of the husband, the obligation of maintenance in Islam, and the social dynamics of the modern family.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses mixed methods, namely quantitative and qualitative approaches, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of domestic husbands in Singapore. (Pujarama and Yustisia 2020) This type of research is descriptive, with the aim of describing the existing conditions related to the role of the husband in the family and the factors that affect it. (Zakariah, Afriani, and Zakariah 2020) A quantitative approach was used to collect statistical data through a survey conducted on household husbands, which included information on the division of domestic roles, family income, and the influence of social and economic factors on the couple's decision to determine the main breadwinner. (Mustika, Rachmat, and Bahri 2013)

In addition, a qualitative approach is applied to explore a deeper understanding of the couple's decision to place the husband as a household. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with married couples who applied the role, to understand their perspectives on the division of domestic duties and maintenance obligations in the context of Islamic teachings. This interview also aims to identify social, economic, and cultural factors that play a role in the formation of this role pattern.

For data analysis, this study combines descriptive statistical analysis for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. This analysis technique allows researchers to identify patterns in the data as well as explore the main themes that emerge from the interviews. With this approach, the research is expected to provide a more holistic insight into the interaction between the husband's domestic role, maintenance obligations, and family social dynamics in the perspective of Maqashid Sharia.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To achieve optimal child growth and development due to the involvement of father and mother is very important, although both have different roles, but it seems clear that they are so complete because they are united in giving birth to children who are good for society.

The involvement of husband and wife in household affairs is not only focused on raising children, but also includes all forms and aspects of responsibility that include family economic affairs. Based on the results of the research obtained:

**Table 1: Reasons for Choosing to be a Husband of Households**

Reason	Percentage
Have enough savings	6.83%
The wife has a high income	8.20%
Health problems	13.6%
Have a job at home	4.10%
Nature of work: project / contract principle	3.15%
Freelancers / freelancers	13.6%
Passive income	41.0%
Other	9.52%
<b>Entire</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Based on the table above, it is known that there are several reasons that husbands choose as household husbands in their households, namely: passive husband's income of 41%; health

problems and freelancers as much as 13.6% each; other reasons (such as: unemployment or difficulty finding a decent job) as much as 9.52%; wives have a higher income of 8.20%; have reasonable savings of 6.83%; Having a home job is 4.10% and having the nature of work as a project/contract principle (outsourcing) as much as 3.15%.

The results of the recapitulation of the opinion survey or reasons why a husband chooses to become a household husband as many as 61.85% said that the decision was taken because of the form of work they have such as contracts, according to projects from time to time, having a passive income at home and being an independent/freelance worker. In addition, as many as 21.80% felt that the ability to manage the household was the reason why they chose to become a household husband because they had health problems and their wives had higher incomes, and 16,

In addition, from the results of data processing that has been collected from surveys of men, there are 39.50% of men who think that the responsibility in the family economic business is the responsibility of the husband himself even though the average income earned is only between \$2,001 to \$3,000. This is in line with the function and purpose of the family, namely the husband's willingness to try to maintain the obligations that have been allocated to them even though they do not have a high income. Meanwhile, 57.90% who think that the family economy is a shared responsibility and managing the household is still subject to the shoulders of the wife because they feel that housework violates the norms of gender roles and responsibilities. For more details, see the following table:

**Table 2: Family Economic Responsibility**

<b>Classification / Gender Class</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Only husband	39.50%
Husband and wife	57.90%
Wife only	2.60%
<b>Entire</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

From the table above, it can be seen that if the husband is given the choice to become the husband of the household, only a few want a wife who has responsibility for the family economy as much as 2.60%. It is impressive to feel that the figure of the wife threatens 'masculinity' as a man and places an inability to do household chores and also gives reasons for being bored, not being able to stay at home and worrying that being a husband of the household will cause the wrath of Allah swt As a result of analyzing the data from the survey conducted on the husband, the researcher found the reason that the economic responsibility of the family is a shared right between husband and wife. This possibility is based on the need for an increase in the cost of living and the need for both to support the need to work for the common good.

The survey results show that the main reason for husbands to become household husbands is due to contractual work conditions or having passive income from family businesses that can be done online. The decision to choose this role is due to the flexibility of the job that allows the husband to work at home without needing to leave, while still earning an income. In addition, the ability to manage time well in managing the household and other tasks that require the help of the husband is also an important reason. However, obstacles arise if the husband cannot divide his time properly between housework and work from home (Herawati, 2019). Based on an interview with Pak Haris, a part-time domestic husband, she revealed that although

her husband is expected to work to maintain the family economy, she feels bound by religious norms that require her husband to provide for the family's basic needs and livelihoods. Mr. Haris stated that even though his wife has a high income, the main task of a husband is still to provide for the family's financial needs. In this case, Mr. Haris argued that the existing job opportunities, even though they can be done from home, do not eliminate the husband's obligation to continue working.

On the other hand, the interview with Mr. Karim, who left his business to become a full-fledged housewife, shows a different reason. Although he previously had a good income, Pak Karim decided to quit working to take care of his sick father and take care of the household. This decision was supported by his wife who has more opportunities to work outside the home. As a husband of the household, Mr. Karim helps to manage the household and maintain family harmony even though financial income cannot be fully fulfilled. Through these two examples, it can be seen that there are differences of views regarding the role of domestic husbands. Pak Haris prioritizes the fulfillment of alimony as a top priority, while Pak Karim puts responsibility in household management and family care as a priority even though the financial aspect is not fully fulfilled.

In perspective analysis *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the role of the domestic husband can be understood as a form of protection for the family that is not only focused on the financial aspect, but also on the welfare of the family as a whole. (Hadaiyatullah et al. 2024) Principle *maqasid al-shari'ah* which emphasizes the protection of life (*Hifz al-Nafs*), property (*Hifz Al-Mal*), and descendants (*Hifz al-Nasl*) requires the husband to continue to play an active role in meeting the needs of the family, both physically and emotionally. (Sufi'y, Muslih, and Khotim 2024) The presence of a husband at home provides closer protection to family members, especially in maintaining family harmony and taking care of children. Children will imitate what they see and hear at home, so the role of husband and wife in setting a good example in parenting is very important in shaping children's character. (Hermanto and Ismail 2020) The concept of observational learning described by Kylie Rymanowicz (2020) shows that children learn a lot from what they observe. Therefore, the management of the household carried out by the husband must be seen as a positive contribution in educating children, which teaches the values of responsibility and cooperation in the household.

Furthermore, responsibilities in the household are not only related to heavy household chores, but also to simpler values such as helping with washing dishes, cleaning the bed, or tidying up toys. This is part of the formation of the child's character, who will learn to be a responsible individual. This education starts at home, and husbands and wives play a role in instilling this attitude. Teaching children to be responsible in their homework, even if it is a small task, will shape them into caring individuals who can help others. In this context, the household is not only a place to work and relax, but also a space to teach the values of sacrifice, cooperation, and understanding, so that the household remains harmonious despite facing challenges.

Thus, although there are differences in the roles of part-time and full-time working domestic husbands, both still aim to maintain the welfare of the family. Perspective *maqasid al-shari'ah* providing a foundation that the husband's responsibility in the household is part of the obligation to maintain the welfare of the family, both from financial, emotional, and social aspects. (Mustofa and Wibawa 2024) As gender roles in the family change, Islamic law remains relevant in accommodating a more flexible role of the domestic husband without neglecting its basic obligations in protecting and maintaining the welfare of the family.

Further analysis of the phenomenon of the domestic husband shows that this change in roles in the family is not only related to economic dynamics, but also to the concept of deeper social and spiritual balance.(Sedayu 2022) In context *maqasid al-shari'ah*, which focuses on maintaining the five main things of religion, soul, intellect, property, and heredity The role of the husband in the household can be seen as an effort to maintain the welfare of the family in all aspects. While the role of a husband working at home or being a full-time household husband can be seen as a form of sacrifice, it is important to see it as a way to ensure that the household continues to run well without sacrificing the core values of family life.

From a point of view *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the husband's responsibility in supporting the emotional and physical needs of the family is also very important.(Risbyantoro, Bela, and Firdaus 2023) Given that one of the main objectives of *maqasid al-shari'ah* is to protect the soul (*Hifz al-Nafs*), then the presence of a husband at home to take care of children and ensure a safe and comfortable environment for the family is part of an effort to maintain the welfare of the family as a whole.(Siregar and Turnip 2023) The presence of the husband at home, in addition to helping with household chores, also has a greater function in maintaining family harmony. This reduces the burden on the wife and creates a balance in the division of household duties, which in turn supports the mental and emotional health of all family members, especially children who learn from the example their parents provide.

Furthermore, in the context of the family economy, although the role of a household husband who does not work fully outside the home may decrease household income, the sustainability aspect of the family business or passive income obtained from other businesses cannot be underestimated. In many cases, the decision to become a husband is not only about the income earned, but also about how the husband can manage his time to focus more on the development of the household and family. For example, a family business that can be done online or freelance work from home allows the husband to continue earning income while carrying out household roles, which ultimately helps maintain the family's economic stability.

In an Islamic perspective, it is important to note that a husband's decision to become a full-time or part-time household husband is often influenced by spiritual awareness and a desire to fulfill the role of a better protector of the family.(Kharlie and Sh 2020) In this case, the role of the husband is not only seen as a financial breadwinner, but also as a provider of happiness and emotional protection for his family. The decision to take care of a sick parent, as Mr. Karim did, is a vivid example of how the role of a domestic husband can include personal sacrifice for the welfare of the family. This kind of sacrifice is also profound in the understanding of religion, where *maqasid al-shari'ah* emphasizing the importance of social welfare and respect for parents (*Birr Al-Walidayn*).

The influence of the husband of the household on the formation of the character of children in the household cannot be ignored. As mentioned by Nadiya Ulya, children's behavior is greatly influenced by what they see and learn from their parents.(Ulya and Diana 2021) Therefore, when the husband is active in taking care of the household, the children will see a good example of responsibility, cooperation, and sacrifice in the family. These values will be the basis for the formation of their character in the future. Education that begins at home, where husband and wife work together, teaches children about the meaning of sacrifice, hard work, and social responsibility. Thus, children who grow up in a healthy and harmonious household environment will be better prepared to face life's challenges and contribute positively to society.

In addition, this analysis also leads to the importance of communication in the family. Decisions regarding the role of the husband and wife often come after a joint conversation

between husband and wife, where they respect each other's role in maintaining the welfare of the family. Open communication and mutual respect are key in facing this challenge, as the success of a household depends not only on the division of tasks, but also on mutual understanding between couples. This shows that in the context of Islam, a happy and prosperous household is not only achieved through a job or a large income, but rather how husband and wife support each other and cooperate in all aspects of life.

Thus, despite differences of opinion regarding the role of domestic husbands, this analysis shows that both part-time and full-time husbands have equally important contributions to maintaining the well-being of the family. The perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah* provides a strong foundation for understanding that the role of the husband in the household is an integral part of the effort to meet the needs of the family holistically, both financially, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. This emphasizes the importance of the husband's role as a protector of the family in all aspects of life, not only as a breadwinner, but also as a supporter and guide in achieving family happiness and welfare.

## CONCLUSION

The dilematics of domestic husbands in marriage in Singapore shows the complexity of the role of husbands in modern families, especially in the context of shifting gender roles. Based on the findings in this study, a husband's decision to become a household both part-time and full-time is influenced by various factors, ranging from economic conditions, family needs, to social and cultural considerations. The phenomenon of domestic husbands is also not only related to the economic aspect, but more broadly includes social and spiritual responsibilities in accordance with the principles of *maqasid al-shari'ah*. In the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the role of the husband as the main breadwinner is not the only measure in assessing the success or welfare of the family, because the main purpose of Islamic law is to maintain the benefit and welfare of all family members, including wives and children.

It is important to note that the role of the domestic husband, although often considered contrary to traditional norms, makes a significant contribution to the management of the household and the care of the family. The concept of *maqasid al-shari'ah* teaches that husbands have responsibilities that are not only limited to providing financial support, but also in maintaining the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of the family. A husband who is at home can pay more attention to the education of children, as well as set an example in terms of sacrifice and hard work. For example, in interviews with several domestic husbands, it was seen that although there were differences of opinion regarding financial obligations, both placed the primary responsibility in household management as part of a more holistic role of the husband.

Overall, the dilematics of domestic husbands in marriage in Singapore reflects social changes that can be understood in the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, where the role and responsibility of the husband goes beyond the financial aspect. This research shows that family welfare can not only be seen from an economic perspective, but also from a balance in meeting the emotional, social, and spiritual needs of all family members. Thus, this understanding provides a broader basis in facing the challenges of the role of the husband in the modern family, as well as prioritizing the values of *maqasid al-shari'ah* that support the harmonization of family life in the context of social changes that occur in Singapore.

## REFERENCE

- Amrullah, Arief. 2018. *Perkembangan Kejahatan Korporasi*. Prenada Media.
- Ardiansyah, Randi, Berti Mandala Putra, and Widia Widia. 2023. “Kondisi Sosial Ekonomi Dan Pendidikan Anak Pada Rumah Tangga Tenaga Kerja Wanita (TKW).” *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan)* 7, no. 1: 321–31.
- Badruddin, Syamsiah. n.d. *Sosiologi Keluarga: Dinamika Dan Tantangan Masyarakat Modern*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Hadaiyatullah, Syeh Sarip, Arif Fikri, Dharmayani Dharmayani, Eti Karini, and Habib Ismail. 2024. “Rekontekstualisasi Fikih Keluarga Di Era Modern: Studi Perbandingan Indonesia, Tunisia, Dan Turki.” *Moderasi: Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2.
- Hermanto, Agus, and Habib Ismail. 2020. “Criticism of Feminist Thought on the Rights and Obligations of Husband and Wife from the Perspective of Islamic Family Law.” *J. Islamic L.* 1: 182.
- Kharlie, Ahmad Tholabi, and M H Sh. 2020. *Kodifikasi Hukum Keluarga Islam Kontemporer: Pembaruan, Pendekatan, Dan Elastisitas Penerapan Hukum*. Prenada Media.
- Mustika, Amalia, Timotius Agus Rachmat, and Asep Syaiful Bahri. 2013. “Pola Pengambilan Keputusan Serta Peran Dan Curahan Kerja Wanita Dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Rumah Tangga Di Daerah Tujuan Wisata.” *Jurnal Ilmiah Pariwisata* 18, no. 3: 231–45.
- Mustofa, Amin, and Iskandar Wibawa. 2024. “Tinjauan Maqashid Asy-Syari’ah Terhadap Perceraian Karena Alasan Ekonomi.”
- Pujarama, Widya, and Ika Rizki Yustisia. 2020. *Aplikasi Metode Analisis Resepsi Untuk Penelitian Gender Dan Media: Untuk Peneliti Pemula Dan Mahasiswa S-1*. Universitas Brawijaya Press.
- Risbyantoro, Hendro, Fitri Mutiah Salsa Bela, and Delfa Firdaus. 2023. “Peran Istri Sebagai Pencari Nafkah Utama Dalam Perspektif Maqashid Al-Syari’ah.” *Sahaja: Journal Sharia and Humanities* 2, no. 2: 198–211.
- Sari, Rahma Pramudya Nawang, and Anton Anton. 2020. “Wanita Karier Perspektif Islam.” *SANGAJI: Jurnal Pemikiran Syariah Dan Hukum* 4, no. 1: 82–115.
- Sedayu, Rahmat Agung. 2022. “Muhammad Syahrur’s Thoughts on Inheritance from the Maqasid Al-Shari’ah Perspective and Hermeneutics.” *Jurnal Mahkamah: Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Hukum Islam* 7, no. 1: 1–14.
- Shofyan, Muhammad. n.d. “Penerapan Hukum Oleh Hakim Pengadilan Agama Surabaya Dalam Pembagian Harta Bersama Berdasarkan Konsep Maslahat Dan Keadilan.” Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
- Siregar, Syahrina, and Ibnu Radwan Siddik Turnip. 2023. “Anak Jalanan Pencari Nafkah Untuk Keluarga Ditinjau Dari Maqashidus Syari’ah.”
- Sufi’y, Mhd, M Muslih, and Ahmad Khotim. 2024. “Implikasi Maqasid Syariah Terhadap Pilihan Reproduksi: Studi Tentang Childfree Di Era Modern.” *Bulletin of Islamic Law* 1, no. 2: 73–82.
- Udasmoro, Wening. 2018. *Dari Doing Ke Undoing Gender: Teori Dan Praktik Dalam Kajian*



*Feminisme*. UGM PRESS.

Ulya, Nadiya, and Raden Rachmy Diana. 2021. "Peran Pola Asuh Orang Tua Dalam Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Diri Pada Anak Usia." *Jurnal Golden Age* 5, no. 2: 304–13.

Zakariah, M Askari, Vivi Afriani, and K H M Zakariah. 2020. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Action Research, Research And Development (R n D)*. Yayasan Pondok Pesantren Al Mawaddah Warrahmah Kolaka.

