

Strengthening Families as A Strategy to Support Nation-State¹

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Abstract

*This paper was written to present the role of the biggest Islamic religious organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and NU, in supporting the nation-state through their roles in strengthening families. Family is the smallest social unit in the society that is a base of the formation of all institutions including the nation-state. Therefore, a nation-state genealogically and sociologically appeared and was formed from some units of families that agree with and bind to each other to live together in an area. As a foundation, family situation becomes the determinant of a nation-state existence and sustainability. A family that is strong and has resiliency will realize a nation-state that is strong and has endurance. On the other hand, if the base of a unit, which is a family, is weak, the nation-state will be easily collapsed. On the basis of the importance of families for the nation-state, the Indonesian government has set the rules, the government regulations, and the minister regulations on family development, such as the Acts No. 10 of 1992 on Family Development. An analysis with sociological approach on some rules above is sufficient for a proof that the state or the government is concerned much at family development. The state even has made the marriage law for the Moslems – as the majority – although based on al-Qur'an and Hadith, Islam has very clearly ruled how to build families. Two Islamic societal organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah, also have the concept of family building, which are *maslahah* family and *sakinah* family. Studies on some rules and concepts related to families have found that all parties commit to realize the family destination, in which a family has toughness and strength in religious, economic,*

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environmental, and social aspects, so that the family functions like the religious function are really guaranteed; families become the center and also the source of varied virtue and glory. Some facts have been found, which are not a few, about collapsed families and households, but the roles of the state and the societal organizations in strengthening families are sufficient to stem the flow of the destruction of a nation-state. Tough families become the main factor of supporting the toughness and strength of the nation-state.

Keywords: Family, Nation-state, Rules, Sakinah, Masalahah.

A. Introduction

Muhammadiyah and NU are the two biggest Islamic religious organizations in Indonesia that have built and taken roles before the Republic of Indonesia was born and proclaimed.² Both have the most number of mass base followers or members and have rooted. Their members or followers are not only limited in the elite communities and the cities, but even have spread over to the remote rural areas. Progress to date, Muhammadiyah is not only centered in cities and NU is not only developing in rural areas. The followers of both Islamic religious organizations can be found in cities and rural areas.

The history noted that the progress and roles of these two organizations on the mankind are very significant in almost all aspects of life: religion, economy, education, health, social, and certainly politics, either in the era before or after the Independence Day even until the post-reform. Both have contributed in guiding and developing the people and the state through many institutions they built and many figures who were born and dedicate their energy and thought for the state.

Muhammadiyah and NU have taught the moderation attitude in religious to their people. Although both were born before the formation of the Republic of Indonesia, their religious attitude are in

² Muhammadiyah was built in 18 Dzulhijjah 1330 H at the same time with 18 December 1912 M by KH. Ahmad Dahlan in Kauman, Yogyakarta (Yunan Yusuf et.al, *Ensiklopedi Muhammadiyah*, Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2005, p. 250). NU was built in Surabaya in 16 Rajab 1334 H or at the same time with 31 January 1926 M (Ahmad Zahro, *Tradisi Intelektual NU*, Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2004, p. 14) by a number of traditional Ulama figures and entrepreneurs in East Java (Martin van Bruinessen, *NU Tradisi Relasi-relasi Kuasa Pencarian Wacana Baru*, translator: Farid Wajdi, Yogyakarta: LKIS, 1997, p.17).

accordance with the state ideology Pancasila. Muhammadiyah and NU keep making efforts to make their people understand the religion well, one of which is by building some institutions whose are tabligh and da'wah institutions that socialize the right religious principles relevant to life either in small space like family or in state context. In economic aspect, both of them have built some economy institutions like cooperative to make their people independent and prosperous without any debts. Muhammadiyah and NU also build many education institutions since the basic level until the highest education. It is very easy to find Muhammadiyah based education institutions all over the state such as Kindergarten and Elementary School until Muhammadiyah University. It is similar to NU with its Masyitoh Kindergarten and NahdatulUlama University. In the past only NU that developed the pesantren education system, but now Muhammadiyah also has built the similar one like NU. Muhammadiyah and NU also have built hospitals and health centers either in cities or in rural areas. Besides, many figures in Muhammadiyah and NU have taken roles in this country, since it is still an embryo until today, like Ki BagusHadikusumo and KH. Wahid Hasyim.

With their existence and contribution, these two Islamic societal organizations are reckoned by the state and become one of the nation's elements as the government partner to strengthen the quality of this nation's people among other things is repairing the family quality. The significant role of both societal organizations is so great, so it can be said that the reciprocation of the Indonesian Moslems and the nation depends on Muhammadiyah and NU.

As the religious organizations, Muhammadiyah and NU develop and base on religion in formulating various behaviors and roles, including in formulating the ideal form of a family and a state. Religious principles are also developed through tight process through majlistarjih forum in Muhammadiyah and bahstulmasa'il in NU, so that the result is actual and relevant and represents the real "religious face" from those societal organizations in their relation to many issues such as education, economy, politics, and many others. The "Islamic heresy" appears from both institutions and is followed by

Muhammadiyah and NU, which differentiates them from other societal organizations.

One of religious principles produced by Muhammadiyah and NU is the family handbook and guide. Muhammadiyah published “KeluargaSakinah” book and “AdabulMar’ahfil Islam”. NU published “KeluargaMaslahah” book.

Families become the concern of the two Islamic great societal organizations because both view that a family is the main pillar of a nation’s strength. Therefore, Islamic intellectual tradition is rich with studies on families from upstream to downstream. Al-Qur’an itself names the third Surah in mushaf order with “Imran family (Ali Imran)”. Many verses and surah in al Qur’an explain about marriage and families.³ Moreover, one of departments in PTKIN is AS (*AhwalusSyahsiyah*) department. This indicates that a family is a central and a bases for a nation’s goodness and badness. The principles of formation, goodness, and strength of nation realized by the two societal organizations are bottom up and not top down, although the state through the government then published regulations such as the Acts No.1 of 1974 on Marriage, the Acts No. 52 of 2009 on the Population Progress and Family Development, the President Instruction No.1 of 1991 on Islamic Legal Compilation, and many others.⁴ Thus, through the bottom and up strategies (of the state), it is expected that qualified, competitive, and civilized families will be realized so that the nation automatically will increase its degree and dignity.

This article will explore the epistemology base of family handbooks from the two Islamic societal organizations by searching what the basic idea of families is in those books, what kinds of theme can be taken using the gender approach or perspective and the discourse analysis method based on family view, concept, and basic value in those books as the reflection or representation of religious

³ Read for example a book written by two Musthafa, Musthafa al-Khin and Musthafa al-Bugha, *al Fiqhul Manhajj*, (Damaskus: DarulQalam, 2007, vol.2, p. 5-16).

⁴ A comprehensive study on various regulations and rules related to families in Indonesia, especially the Moslem families, was conducted by KhoiruddinNasution in his work, *Hukum Perdata (Keluarga) Islam Indonesia dan Perbandingan Hukum Perkawinan di Dunia Muslim* (Yogyakarta, Academia+Tazzafa, 2009).

view of the two religious societal organizations, Muhammadiyah and NU.

B. Sakinah Family: Asset of State Stability

Through its autonomous institution, 'Aisyiyah Muhammadiyah published "*Tuntunan Menuju Keluarga Sakinah*"⁵ book in 1989 as a mandate from the decision of the 41st Mukhtamar Muhammadiyah in Surakarta and the decision of Mukhtamar Tarjih in Sidoarjo in 1968. This book was arranged as a response to the society development in accordance with the technology development that is worried to be able to shift the values in the society, especially the Moslem families. This book was also published to increase the role of Aisyiyah mubalighat in giving motivation to the sakinah family.⁶

This book is divided into three parts with two main themes; norms of man and woman relationship and a guide to fostering and educating for families. The main attention of this books is related to the norms of husband and wife relationship that is in the rights and obligations of both in a family. It is mentioned that besides the together rights and obligations between husband and wife, there are also different rights and obligations between them. What makes it interesting is that this book emphasizes more in difference rather than similarity of the rights and obligations between husband and wife.⁷ What makes it more interesting is that the subordinate of the grouping related to the division of labor between husband and wife in

⁵ The Central Head of 'Aisyiyah, *Tuntunan Menuju Keluarga Sakinah* (Yogyakarta: Pimpinan Pusat 'Aisyiyah, 1989). Seven years before, Majelis Tarjih of the Central Head of Muhammadiyah published *Adabul Mar'ah Fil Islam* book.

⁶ Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin has made excellent analysis related to Ahmad Dahlan's choice to strengthen the women by choosing 'Aisyiyah as a figure. According to her, 'Aisyiyah is Rasullullah's wife who is active, a hadith expert, a teacher for Moslem women, works for her household, and is involved in politics. Nevertheless, quoting Brown's analysis, Ruhaini stated that 'Aisyiyah is a 'womanhood' organization oriented in families. This is sufficient for a proof that the early Muhammadiyah had no consciousness of women's dominant economy role like Khadijah. (Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin; *Rezim Gender Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2015, p.142-144). This analysis is very precise, as described in the explanation of *Tuntunan Keluarga Sakinah* book.

⁷ The mapping conducted in this book is very common as presented in other books, like in *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Tematik Membangun Keluarga Harmoni* published by the Ministry of Religion in 2012, p.108-117.

a family is very clear. The main task of a man is leading the family and as the breadwinner, while the woman is the housekeeping. The division of labor then implicates in the function and fostering of a family. In SitiRuhaini's eyes, the family concept is a gender construction in Muhammadiyah growing period.⁸ Therefore, it can be understood why this book allocates more attention to the women role and position in a family. Although the family structure discussed includes three main members of family those are husband, wife, and children, there is an indication that the real object of this book's prescriptions is woman as a wife or a mother. On the other word, women's role and position in families is the central theme of this book and becomes one of this books' message to the readers. In this book a wife's obligations are three times more than a husband's. Therefore, this book collects in details the forms of attitude guide a wife should show to her husband, which are sometimes supported by mentioning verses or hadiths.

A family, as mentioned by this book, is *batih* family (basic family) that consists of a mother, a father, and children. Such a family is the first one fought for to be an ideal family called "sakinah family". Sakinah family is a family that is serene, peaceful, happy, and prosperous physically and mentally. Quoting surah ar-Rum [30]: 21, the aim of a family is to seek peacefulness and serenity, *mawaddah* and *rahmah*.

It is mentioned in this book that in a *sakinah* family, each member feels peaceful, safe, happy, and prosperous physically and mentally. Physical prosperity is free from treasure poverty and physical disease stresses. While mental prosperity is free from faith poverty, worry of the hereafter life, and able to communicate religious values in family and social life. Thus, Muhammadiyah, through 'Aisyiyah, does not only emphasize the mental spiritual serenity and prosperity but also physical material ones built through the right religious understanding. That is why, since the beginning this book warns the readers to be intellectual in choosing a couple. The harmony between the couples is the main norm in selecting the soul mate and the religious harmony is the main priority because a

⁸ Ruhaini, *Rezim ...*, p.142.

marriage interest is “keeping religious safety and moral values for the descendants”. Religious harmony is “family serenity”. Ideal family will be achieved if there is religious harmony.

Family in this book is a forum of development. To reach *sakinah* predicate, family life should be managed well by realizing five main aspects those are: 1) realizing religious life and *ubudiah* in families with Islamic atmosphere, 2) realizing strong families through faith education, skill, and independency, 3) family health guaranteed from house and yard cleanliness and family nutrition, 4) stable family economy with family financial usage planning and sufficient income and also saving habit, and 5) good human relationship among the members of families and among the families.⁹

The main function of families is educating and developing, not only in the small family but also in the context of wide society. Family development is a requirement in society development. It is mentioned in the book that “efforts to realize prosperous society will be reached if each family is a *sakinah* family”. The important message in family development is that “parents do not let their descendants left in weak condition in facing life treatment”.

If it is well developed, a family in wide definition either in kinship or nation citizenship will be developed also and in its turn will be a capital of the stability of a nation. In family development, father and mother are responsible for and technically involved in children’s education activities although there is emphasis that a mother should be more dominant in developing the children in the aspects of economy, health, and social.

C. Masalah Family: Capital of State Endurance

NU has an autonomous institution called Lembaga Kemaslahatan Keluarga (LKK-NU) that focuses on family problems. Anything contained in *Membina Kemaslahatan Keluarga*¹⁰ book is the legal view of NU that can be the main guide for society

⁹ See also Ismah Salman’s work, *Keluarga Sakinah dalam ‘Aisyiyah: Diskusi Jender di Organisasi Perempuan Muhammadiyah* (Jakarta: PSAP, 2005, p.145).

¹⁰ Andi M. Ramly Sunrawa, *Membina Kemaslahatan Keluarga*, (Jakarta: LKKNU dan BKKBN, 1994).

development. This book was written together, one of which is a figure of NU, dr. Fahmi Saifuddin, with the counsellor KH. Idham Khalid Ali Yafie. The introduction was delivered by Nyai Wahid Hasyim and KH. Idham Khalid.

This book was written when the government nationally delivered Keluarga Berencana (the Family Planning) in the 1970s. As known before, this program at the beginning was refused by the Moslem society because it is considered to be in contrast with Islamic norms, especially as understood from QS. Hud [11]: 6 that explicitly mentions Allah's guarantee for His creatures' livelihood, including human.

Due to the bad response of the society, the government held hands with two Islamic big societal organizations, Muhammadiyah and NU, to deliver this KB problem. Similar to Muhammadiyah, NU welcomed the asking for cooperation because it viewed that population problem is a common problem (*masa'ilil 'am*) that should be solved together. Two figures of NU give introduction on this book those are Nyai Wahid Hasyim and Idham Khalid who each affirms that Islam society as the biggest population should also think about population problem with religious approach.¹¹ Added by Idham Khalid, NU should support the government program because NU should participate in creating qualified society proclaimed by the government.¹² If that is the aim, it is really in accordance with the Islamic norms.

Because this book was constructed to support KB program with religious approach, so it is reasonable if it contains the religious thinking basis in order to implement the birth planning program (*nidzamunnash*), in which hopefully this may guide the NU society in creating the superior family.

¹¹ Religious approach is one of the most potential "tools" to doctrine the society, especially the Islam society by presenting the verses in al-Qur'an, Hadiths, and even Fiqih. This is because the Islam society believe so much on the verses as the authoritative ones. In Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid language, Islam society is textual civilized (*hadaratunnash*). Through text the religious mind of the society is built. Therefore, the existence of verses or text is an inevitability.

¹² That was later formulated in the new concept and vision "Qualified Family 2015" formulated by the Coordination Department of National Family Planning (BKKBN).

Different from the book written by Muhammadiyah, *Membina Kemashlahatan Keluarga* book is full of religious arguments, one of which is QS. An-Nisa' [4]:9 that means:

And let those fear as if they [themselves] had left weak offspring behind and feared for them. So let them fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice.

And a Hadith (which means): "The heaviest trial danger is a lot of family burden with a little wealth". In NU view, the affirmation of this verse and hadith above is sufficient as a base that we have to prepare the future generation who are strong either in faith, economy, or politics.

In this book, a new interpretation is also explained on verse or hadith that is viewed not in accordance with the spirit of building the nation quality. As in QS Hud: 6 and al-Isra' [17]: 31 that are usually used as an argument to refuse the Family Planning program.

Besides, the sociological-empiric argument is also presented by presenting the problems and challenges faced by the Indonesian nation related to the population's quantity, quality, and mobility. This argument is presented to add the weight to the religious argument so that people is easy to receive and follow the suggestion about Family Planning. The sociological argument built is that the slowing population growth rate will contribute in the creation of people's prosperity. In turns, people's prosperity acceleration will give positive impact on the social entity and stability.¹³

The decrease in the number of population is the indicator of the decrease in the birth rate. The increase in the birth rate means reducing the number of family members and a few children taken care by a mother.¹⁴ In turns, a few children taken care will increase their quality and give opportunity to the mother to improve her potential more and more. Qualified children will lengthen the life expectancy. The increase in life expectancy will make a change in the structure of

¹³ The sociological argument is parallel with the government program that was intensively conducting development in many sectors. At that time the government did not only try to create the stability but also the entity of population.

¹⁴ The social construction used by these book writers still used the old paradigm, in which women as the primary caregiver of the children, as reflected in Imam Nawawi al-Bantani's work, *'Uqudul Lujjaini*.

age of population. Qualified population is the national development capital. What this book should note is that NU does not only emphasize on the physical but also the non-physical quality. The physical quality is introduced by the government while the non-physical one is more emphasized by the NU religious figure. Such a synergy has made the Indonesian Family Planning program in the New Order era reap success.

The other sociological argument built in this book is related to the population change, among others are the problems of inequality in education, economy and occupation, the high crime rate, the drug abuse, and some others. Such problems make it difficult to reach the people's *masalah*. Therefore, NU was encouraged to support the government program related to the Family Planning. For NU, Family Planning is an effort of reducing the birth rate to reach *masalah*.¹⁵ It is not only carnal, material, and worldly, but also spiritual and *ukrawiyah*. It is the ideals of all Moslems, either individual, family or society. Based on that, there is no reason for NU not to support Family Planning program, because Family Planning is an effort to reach *masalah*. Therefore, *masalah* family is a base for the nation's *masalah* and in accordance with NU spirit in the nation's quality development.

Developing and realizing the family benefit (*masalah*) is not only the nation's duty but more than that, it is the Islamic syariah demand. Therefore, anyone must implement it. As presented before, NU is active and becomes the main part of making the Family Planning program successful because in NU's view, this program is suitable to *maqasidussyari'ah* or *al-kulliyatulkhams* that is *hifdzunnafs*, *hifdzul 'aql*, *hifdzulmal*, *hifdzunnaql*, and *hifdzud din*.

Similar to Muhammadiyah, NU has a paradigm of a happy small family is like a nation.¹⁶ Therefore, in this book family only consists

¹⁵ As those resting on textual, including UshulFiqh Principle textual, NU refers to *Tasharruful imam 'alar ro'iah manutun bilmasalah* principle. *Maslahah* contains ideas about human goodness, interest, and welfare, people's benefit and welfare (Djohan Effendi, *Pembaharuan Tanpa Membongkar Tradisi* (Jakarta: Kompas. 2010), p.195.

¹⁶ Read R. Soewarno's work, *Membina Keluarga Sejahtera* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 1985). In Julia Suryakusuma's view, family construction in the nation's concept, which is then followed by Muhammadiyah and NU, is mother-ism construction. Julia's view and critique

of husband, wife, and children. The benefit of a happy small family will be reached if the three units of family builder fulfill such criteria, 1) a husband who loves his wife, understands her nature and honors her humanity, 2) a wife who knows, loves, and honors her husband, who is obedient and faithful, able to handle the households thoroughly, courageous and wise in caring, educating and growing the children, and 3) children who receive attention and love and are treated fairly.

D. Analysis of Concepts of Muhammadiyah and NU

As presented previously, serenity and peacefulness are the basic values in building *sakinah* (harmonious) family. Division of labor in a family is a must in order to reach the quality. When the division of labor is not implemented, there will be a flush. Interestingly, the concept of *sakinah* family of 'Aisyiyah offers the justice and equality values. Consequently, the wife's or mother's responsibility is more than the husband's or the father's. Certainly it can be understood because 'Aisyiyah still followed the traditional gender ideology when the book was written. In this ideology, woman is a subordinate for man. Woman's identity is united in the husband's shadow. The subordinate of a woman to a man can be seen in the position of a wife as the husband's servant. In its development, as explained by Ruhaini, the traditional gender ideology is being abandoned and turns to equal partnership relation pattern.¹⁷ By examining the division of labor pattern in Guide book, 'Aisyiyah at the beginning also represented the classical *fiqh* view, in which woman is viewed as the passive one and when getting married, her main tasks are taking caring of the households, giving birth, caring for the children, serving and being responsible to her husband. Woman is viewed as the domestic creature in her traditional position. At the other side, man is described as the active one. The view is very strong even has legitimation from the state, as reflected in the Marriage Law No. 1 of

can be read in her work, *Ibuisme Negara Konstruksi Sosial Keperempuan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2011).

¹⁷ Ruhaini, *Rezim ...*, p.160-161.

1974. It is not surprising if one day the paradigm and that Law will get the sharp criticism from the experts.¹⁸

‘Aisyiyah since the beginning has also wished for the realization of established middle class. The profile of sakinah family can be seen in this established middle class. Middle class is those economically have no problems so that their house becomes adequate place to guide and educate families. The tough generation will be born from the good family education. The tough generation will make the state strong.

Insan Kamil (mature human) is the aim of the maslahah family. Similar to the Guide book, economy ability is the main indicator of the maslahah family. Regulating the birth is one of ways to strengthen family’s economy. Thus, in NU’s paradigm, reducing the number of families is one of ways to increase the economy. Therefore, there are two things required to be considered to reach the maslahah family those are pre-wedding and post-wedding. In pre-wedding period, someone should have mature calculation either materially or spiritually whether he or she has been ready to develop a family or not. In post-wedding period, some should be considered whether they will have children or not, when they will have children, how to care for the children, et cetera. A few children give more opportunities to realize the *insan kamil*.

As explained in the Guide book, the Development book also still refers to the traditional gender ideology by positioning women as the domestic creature whose main tasks are educating the children, serving the husband, and keeping the house. In Family Planning program, woman is the main object of target.

E. Conclusion

Family is the ultimate study and the primary concern in the Islamic scientific discourse, including in PTKIN environment. In PTKIN there is al-Ahwalasy-Syakhshiyah study program that focuses

¹⁸ As an example, read the writing of Mochammad Sodik, “*Hukum Keluarga Indonesia (Kritisisme terhadap KHI dan RUU HTPA)*” in Siti Ruhaini Dz., et al. *Menuju Hukum Keluarga Progresif, Responsif Gender, dan Akomodatif Hak Anak* (Yogyakarta: PSW UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2013).

in obtaining deeper understanding on family problems. Therefore, family theme and various problems related to it become the fertile ground of the intellectuals' study. Family has the important and strategic position because it becomes the state's primary builder. Qualified family will become the important factor of realizing the strong family.

Muhammadiyah and NU are the two biggest religious organizations in Indonesia that have family development concept those are *sakinah*(harmonious) family and *maslahah* (benefit) family. Although both concepts are gender bias, Muhammadiyah and NU have greatly contributed in the state's long lasting and strength. Through the concepts of *sakinah* and *maslahah*, both have endeavored to strengthen the family. The state will be strong with the strong and qualified families.

The program of *sakinah* and *maslahah* family is consistent and even becomes the basic materials for the government in formulating the policies. Therefore, it can be understood if both Islamic societal organizations become the state's guard of any challenge, either from internal or external parties. The consistency of both Islamic societal organizations will not bring generations who want to change the state's ideology. So strengthening families is a powerful strategy to strengthen the state-nation. A strong nation is sourced from the strong families.

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14