

Gender Equality within Family in Islamic Perspective: Insights from The Hadiths of Ummul Mukminin

Kesetaraan Gender dalam Keluarga Perspektif Islam: Wawasan dari Hadis-Hadis Ummul Mukminin.

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Abstract

The concept of gender equality is crucial in reinforcing societal foundations and addressing issues of injustice. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding gender equality within the context of families, recognized as one of society's most influential institutions. By exploring gender dynamics within the family, this research draws on the Hadith, which encapsulates historical records and narratives from the Prophet Muhammad's life in a patriarchal Arab society. Despite societal norms, the Prophet's Hadith texts, driven by principles of equality and justice, advocate for equal relationships between men and women, sparking considerable debate and protest from his contemporaries. The significance of Hadith texts from Ummul Mukminin (the Mothers of the Believers) in discussing gender relations within the family lies in their potential to serve as a reference source. Utilizing content analysis as a methodology, this research provides a comprehensive examination of relevant Hadiths and their implications for modern gender equality within the family. The findings highlight the Prophet's dedication to creating a model of marital relations based on mutual respect, compassion, and equality. The study positions these texts as guides for families, helping them reinforce their functions and internalize equality values, contributing to the formation of a *maslahah* family—a family governed by principles prioritizing societal well-being.

Keyword: *Gender equality, Islam, Hadith, family, the mothers of believers*

Abstrak

Konsep kesetaraan gender sangat penting dalam memperkuat fondasi masyarakat dan mengatasi masalah ketidakadilan. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya memahami kesetaraan gender dalam konteks keluarga, yang diakui sebagai salah satu lembaga paling berpengaruh dalam masyarakat. Dengan mengeksplorasi dinamika gender dalam keluarga, penelitian ini menggunakan Hadis, yang mencakup catatan sejarah dan narasi dari kehidupan Nabi Muhammad dalam masyarakat Arab patriarkal. Meskipun norma-norma sosial, teks Hadis Nabi yang berakar pada prinsip kesetaraan dan keadilan, mempromosikan hubungan setara antara pria dan wanita, yang memicu perdebatan dan protes dari rekan-rekan sezamannya. Signifikansi Hadis dari Ummul Mukminin (Ibu Para Mukmin) dalam membahas hubungan gender dalam keluarga terletak pada potensinya sebagai sumber referensi. Menggunakan analisis isi, penelitian ini secara komprehensif memeriksa Hadis-hadis yang relevan dan implikasinya terhadap kesetaraan gender modern dalam keluarga. Temuan ini menyoroti dedikasi Nabi dalam menciptakan model hubungan pernikahan berdasarkan saling menghormati, kasih sayang, dan kesetaraan. Studi ini memposisikan teks-teks tersebut sebagai panduan bagi keluarga, membantu mereka memperkuat fungsi mereka dan menginternalisasi nilai-nilai kesetaraan, yang



berkontribusi pada pembentukan keluarga masalah—keluarga yang diatur oleh prinsip-prinsip yang memprioritaskan kesejahteraan masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Kesetaraan Gender, Islam, Hadis, Keluarga, Ummul Mukminin*

Introduction

Gender disparities have long been a significant concern due to their role in perpetuating injustice for both men and women. This injustice takes various forms, such as role restrictions, biased thinking, and differential treatment, leading to human rights violations and impeding gender equality. Issues such as subordination, gender stereotypes, the double burden on women, marginalization, and violence are prevalent.¹ The high incidence of violence against women, particularly in the domestic sphere, a place that is supposed to be a safe and comfortable haven (Kemenppa.go.id). Domestic violence is often tied to unequal power dynamics between genders.² A major cause of gender injustice is the construction of gender biases. In families, gender relations are shaped by socio-cultural constructs and religious interpretations, which are often misconstrued as definitive teachings rather than products of historical and cultural contexts.

Aminah Wadud Muhsin, in her book *Qur'an and Woman*, emphasizes that the Quran contains verses that inherently promote fairness and equality. However, interpretations of these texts are often influenced by predominantly male interpreters who are deeply rooted in patriarchal traditions and socio-cultural norms.³ This bias in interpretation has significant implications for societal constructs and paradigms, perpetuating gender injustice in various forms. For example, male dominance in Quranic interpretation has impacted policymaking in both domestic and public spheres, leading to unfair role distribution within families.⁴ Therefore, it is essential to develop new interpretations that foster equality, gradually transforming gender-biased relations into a more equitable and egalitarian framework.

The Hadith, as an interpretation of the Qur'an, significantly influences societal gender relations. This influence stems from the Hadith's normative teachings and its

1 Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001).

2 Rosari Griffin, *Education in the Muslim World: Different Perspectives* (Oxford: Symposium Books Ltd, 2006).

3 Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

4 Ummiyatul Labibah, Imam Taufiq, and Moh Yasir Alimi, "Living Qur'an of Pesantren Women: A Manifestation of QS. An-Nisa 34 in A Woman Leadership Role of Nyai Munjidah Wahab," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 23, no. 1 (January 31, 2022): 89–110, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2022.2301-05>.

documentation of historical events. Notably, the Hadith includes detailed accounts of the domestic life of Prophet Muhammad and his wives. These accounts are primarily narrated by his wives, collectively known as the Ummul Mukminin (Mothers of the Believers). Analyzing these Hadiths offers critical insights into gender dynamics within the family, providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between gender roles and religious teachings.

Several scholars have identified Hadiths considered misogynistic and gender-biased. Examples include Hadiths about women's absolute obligation to obey their husbands, prohibiting women from becoming leaders, and stating that most inhabitants of hell are women.⁵ These Hadiths are frequently cited in religious sermons, reinforcing patriarchal gender constructs. Khaled Abou El-Fadl argues that misogynistic Hadiths should not serve as a basis for legal rulings because they contradict fundamental human moral principles.⁶ However, examining the stories from the Prophet's household reveals that he often exemplified equal relations within his family. This contrast underscores the potential for reinterpreting religious texts to promote gender equality.

This article examines gender relations within the family of Prophet Muhammad, focusing on gender equality in familial contexts and the role of Ummul Mukminin in promoting gender education. It contributes to the scholarly understanding of gender equality in Islamic studies. Nasaruddin Umar emphasizes that the Qur'an recognizes biological and anatomical differences without justifying gender superiority, advocating for harmonious and compassionate relationships between men and women.⁷ Ida Afidah⁸ and Aih Mitamimah⁹ analyze women's roles in the discourse of gender equality from an Islamic perspective, highlighting the equal status of men and women before God. These studies indicate that Islamic texts support gender equality, challenging patriarchal interpretations and reinforcing equitable principles in Islamic teachings. Additionally, there is research on methodologies for understanding religious texts concerning gender relations. For example, Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir discusses women's rights from the *mubadalah* perspective, which promotes a reciprocal and cooperative relationship between

5 Fatima Mernissi, *He Forgotten Queens of Islam* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).

6 Khaled M Abou el-Fadl, *Atas Nama Tuhan; Dari Fikih Otoriter Ke Fikif Otoritatif* (Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2004).

7 Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender Perspektif Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999).

8 Ida Afidah, "Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment: A Qur'anic and Hadith Perspective on Women's Roles in Islam," *Diroyah: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Hadith* 7, no. 2 (2023): 252–70.

9 Aih Mitamimah, "Kesetaraan Kedudukan Perempuan Dan Laki-Laki Dalam Perspektif Hadis," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 1, no. 1 (2021): 29–44, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v1i1.14254>.

genders.¹⁰ Akrimi Matswah's analysis of Edip Yuksel's interpretation of family-related verses suggests that reforms based on gender equality could significantly impact Indonesian law and family studies. However, unlike this article, Akrimi's research focuses on misogynistic Hadiths.¹¹

The content analysis method¹² used in this research, involves a systematic examination of texts to identify patterns, themes, and meanings. In this study, the process begins with selecting relevant Hadiths narrated by Ummul Mukminin, focusing on those addressing gender relations within the family. The selected texts are then coded, categorizing significant themes such as equality, justice, and familial roles. Next, the frequency and context of these themes are analyzed to discern patterns and variations in the narratives. This method also includes cross-referencing the Hadiths with secondary sources to validate interpretations and ensure comprehensive analysis. By employing content analysis, the study elucidates how the Hadiths advocate for gender equality and the implications for modern family dynamics, providing a robust framework for promoting equitable principles in contemporary Islamic families.

Gender Relation in The Family in Early Muslim History

It is crucial to distinguish between "gender" and "sex" to understand the concept of gender. The term gender originated from the English language and is often used synonymously with sex. Some authors use these terms interchangeably. However, Wood clarifies that "sex is a designation based on biology, while gender is socially, culturally, and psychologically constructed." Sex is classified by biological characteristics, with society using genetic and biological qualities to define whether a person is male or female.¹³ Sex can be understood as the classification of individuals as female or male based on their genes, anatomy, and reproductive functions.¹⁴ Meanwhile, gender describes characteristics that represent discernible differences in behavior and values between men and women. Men and women can choose to perform different roles based on their preferences, which are represented by gender.

10 Abdul Kodir, *Qira'ah Mubadalah: Tafsir Progresif Untuk Keadilan Gender Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019).

11 Akrimi Matswah, "Reinterpretasi Ayat-Ayat Tentang Relasi Gender Dalam Keluarga," *SUHUF* 7, no. 2 (2014): 303-328.

12 Andi Rahman, "Penggunaan Metode Content Analysis Dalam Penelitian Hadis," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 3, no. 1 (June 25, 2014): 101-17, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v3i1.1165>.

13 JT Wood, "Entered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture," *World Journal of English Language* 3 (1999): 20.

14 Claire A Etaugh and Judith S Bridges, *Women's Lives: A Psychological Exploration* (Routledge, 2023).

The primary difference between males and females lies in their reproductive organs.¹⁵ These ideas suggest that sex is more physiologically based, while gender is influenced by social and cultural factors. Gender, therefore, is a social construct manifested in specific role options that men and women can choose.¹⁶ However, these role options are often constrained by societal norms, leading to a biased construction of gender.

The development of gender relations and role patterns has seen significant changes in recent years. Gender relations are influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including cultural, social, economic, and historical elements. The influence of global restructuring has impacted how families and lives are organized, particularly in response to increased childcare needs and evolving responsibilities.¹⁷ In this context, women, especially mothers, face considerable pressure due to conflicting demands from household chores, paid employment, caregiving, family obligations, and the growing expectations to actively contribute to their children's education and ensure their success in a competitive world.¹⁸

Gender relations can be problematic when they result in gender injustice, affecting both men and women. Gender injustice constitutes a system and structure in which both genders become victims. This injustice manifests in various forms, including economic marginalization or impoverishment, subordination or perceived insignificance in political decisions, formation of stereotypes or negative labeling, violence, longer and heavier work burdens, and the socialization of gender role ideology. These manifestations of gender injustice are interconnected and influence each other dialectically.¹⁹ Thus, understanding gender is closely related to the dynamics of relations between men and women and how these relations are constructed and reinforced by society, including within the family as the smallest societal institution.

Traditionally, family relations often place men in a seemingly superior position, attributing to them greater abilities, power, and strength compared to women. The ideal division of roles within the family, according to societal norms, is when men take full responsibility for economic matters, while women handle domestic issues. This can create a double burden for women if they also engage in public roles. Similarly, men may feel the strain of absolute economic responsibility

15 Wilis Werdiningsih and Ahmad Natsir, "Gender Equality and Equity with Mubadalah Concept and Its Implementation in Islamic Education," *ADDIN* 14, no. 2 (2020): 305–28.

16 Muhammad Irsad, Abdul Mustaqim, and Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, "Paradigm Shifts in Gender Narratives of Tafsir Al-Ibriz through Oral Exegesis on Youtube," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 1 (May 14, 2024): 141–60, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i1.5416>.

17 Miriam E David, *Personal and Political: Feminisms, Sociology, and Family Lives* (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books, 2003).

18 Raewyn Connell, *Confronting Equality: Gender, Knowledge and Global Change* (Routledge, 2020).

19 Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial*.

for the family, especially as living costs rise. Ideally, relationships between men and women within the family should be based on equality and mutual complementarity. Achieving this within the family can positively impact society. Gender equality aims to balance roles between men and women in both family and society, eliminating the notion that certain roles are exclusively male or female.

Gender relations within families during the early Islamic period were heavily influenced by the preceding era of pre-Islamic Arabia. This influence is evident in the inadequate treatment of women, as reflected in Arab traditions of the time. For example, the birth of a baby girl was often considered a disgrace, leading to the abhorrent practice of burying newborn baby girls alive. Pre-Islamic Arab society practiced various forms of marriage, including matrilineal, polyandrous, and polygamous unions. According to Montgomery Watt, pre-Islamic Arab society was matrilineal, meaning lineage was traced through the mother's side. This matrilineal structure is evident in the background of Prophet Muhammad as well. For instance, Muhammad's grandfather was from his mother's clan, and his mother, Aminah, remained with her clan after marrying 'Abdullāh, with 'Abdullāh visiting her there. It was only after his mother's death that Muhammad was raised by his father's relatives.²⁰

With the rise of trade in Makkah, communal values transformed, leading to wealth accumulation by individual merchants. This shift compelled men to prioritize passing on their wealth to their descendants, resulting in the replacement of the matrilineal system with a patrilineal one.²¹ Polyandrous and polygamous marriages were prevalent in pre-Islamic Arab society, with husbands often visiting their various wives who resided with their respective tribes. Similarly, some wives were visited by multiple husbands. Additionally, divorce and remarriage were common practices for both men and women, with either party having the authority to initiate the dissolution of the marriage. However, these divorces and remarriages were not followed by an *iddah* or waiting period, a practice later emphasized in Islam, resulting in divorce and remarriage being conducted with little regulation.²²

It can be argued that gender relations within families in early Islamic Arab society were generally patriarchal, with women (wives) occupying an inferior position and lacking rights, including the right to express opinions. Women were treated as objects that could be inherited and were far from being considered equal. However,

20 W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1953).

21 Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*.

22 Zunly Nadia, *Perempuan Dalam Periwiyatan Hadis: Antara Otoristas Dan Kepentingan* (Yogyakarta: Bildung, 2023).

the advent of Prophet Muhammad brought new enlightenment and served as a real example in his household, challenging and reshaping prevailing gender dynamics.

Understanding Ummul Mukminin and their Transmitted Hadith

The family life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serves as a role model for Muslims, reflecting a mission of justice and equality among humanity. Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) everyday life exemplifies the prophetic teachings, which are a mercy for all mankind. The wives of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), known as Ummul Mukminin (Mothers of the Believers), were the closest individuals to him and had an intimate understanding of his daily life. These women played a crucial role in narrating stories about Prophet Muhammad's family life. The details of his household are often recounted in the Hadiths transmitted by these noble women.

Hadiths are collections of recorded sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that include not only his textual sayings but also records of events, actions, and behaviors in his daily life. These Hadiths illuminate the Prophet's relationships with and responses to the actions of his companions. The Ummul Mukminin (Mothers of the Believers) served as intermediaries, conveying information about the marital relationship established within his family through the Hadiths they disseminated.

There are approximately 6,973 Hadiths transmitted by the Ummul Mukminin recorded in major Hadith collections, such as *Kutub al-Tis'ah*. These Hadiths address a wide range of topics, including religious matters, worship, social and communal challenges, women's issues, and family-related personal matters. This diversity highlights the role of the Ummul Mukminin not only in handling domestic issues but also in actively participating in public affairs, such as engaging in warfare, participating in celebrations, performing congregational prayers, and undertaking the pilgrimage (*hajj*).²³

The Ummul Mukminin, by narrating these Hadiths, contribute to preserving and disseminating the Prophet's teachings and lifestyle. Their multifaceted involvement demonstrates their significance not only in the private sphere of family life but also in the broader public sphere, portraying the balanced and comprehensive nature of the Prophet's guidance for the Muslim community as a whole. A'isha binti Abu Bakar is one of the major Hadith narrators. The number of Hadiths she narrated is extensive, surpassing those narrated by other companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Hadiths narrated by A'isha amount to 5,965 out of the 72,469 Hadiths recorded in the nine major Hadith collections (*Kutub al-Tis'ah*). This is a substantial quantity, second only to Abu Hurairah, Abdullah bin Umar ibn

23 Nadia, *Perempuan Dalam Perwayatan Hadis*.

al-Khattab, and Anas bin Malik.

Several factors contributed to A'isha's distinction as the woman who narrated the most Hadiths. A'isha was renowned for her exceptional intelligence and her unique position as the Prophet Muhammad's wife for nine years. She was the only wife who frequently witnessed revelations, providing her with firsthand experience of the Prophet's life and actions. Consequently, most of the Hadiths narrated by A'isha are directly from the Prophet and are *fi'liyah* traditions, recounting the Prophet's actions. Additionally, many of the traditions narrated by A'isha are singular traditions (*al-infirād bi riwāyat al-ḥadīth*), meaning they are not narrated by other narrators.²⁴ A'isha was stringent in maintaining the principle of narration *bi al-lafz* (verbatim transmission) and rejecting *riwayah bil ma'na* (transmission by meaning). Many companions would consult her to verify their memorization of Hadiths, and she would correct any errors. This meticulous approach contributed to her special status among the Prophet's wives and solidified her significant role in the development of Hadith not only in narration but also in understanding and teaching Hadith.²⁵ A'isha possessed a profound ability to understand Hadith and make legal judgments, making her one of the companions who issued many fatwas. As Sulaiman An-Nadawi noted, A'isha uniquely combined the abilities to memorize and deeply understand Hadith, a combination not all companions possessed.²⁶

After A'isha binti Abu Bakar, Umm Salama is the second most prolific Hadith narrator. Approximately 622 Hadiths narrated by Umm Salama are found in the nine major Hadith collections. Umm Salama married the Prophet Muhammad in 4 H, after his marriages to A'isha, Hafsa, and Zainab. She was the last of the Prophet's wives to die, passing away in 62 AH. Umm Salama's life as the Prophet's wife had several notable features. She was a beautiful and intelligent woman who had recorded many events even before becoming the Prophet's wife. Umm Salama also served as a reference point for other companions who sought her advice on religious matters. Several Quranic verses were revealed in response to Umm Salama's inquiries and protests, including Surah An-Nisa (4:32), Surah Al-Imran (3:195), and Surah Al-Ahzab (33:35). Additionally, Al-Suyuti mentioned that Umm Salama had seen the angel Gabriel in human form. Gabriel visited the Prophet while he was with Umm Salama.²⁷

24 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Maḥmūd Ṭahmāz, *Al-Sayyidah 'Āishah: Umm al-Mu'Minīn Wa 'Ālimah Nisā' al-Islām* (Damaskus: Dār al-Qalam, 1994).

25 Ummiyatul Istiqlaliyah, "Peran Dan Pengaruh Aisyah Dalam Bidang Hadis," *Dirosat: Jurnal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2016): 41–51.

26 Sulaiman Al Nadawi, *'Aishah The True Beauty*, Ghazi M (Jakarta: Pena Pundi Aksara, 2007).

27 Abd Al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakar jalal al-Din Al Suyuti, *Al-Durr al-Manthur Fi al-Ta'wil Bi al-Ma'thur*,

Maimunah binti Haris is among the Mothers of the Believers and was the last wife married by Prophet Muhammad. She was a female narrator who collected thirty-one Hadiths, all of which came directly from the Prophet. These thirty-one Hadiths are mentioned a total of 172 times in the nine major Hadith collections. Hafsa binti Umar bin al-Khaththab, another Mother of the Believers and the daughter of Caliph Umar bin al-Khaththab, narrated 28 Hadiths, which are mentioned 147 times in the nine major Hadith collections.²⁸ Umm Habiba, with the closest lineage to Prophet Muhammad, is also among the Mothers of the Believers who actively narrated Hadiths from the Prophet. These Hadiths are transmitted through Zainab binti Jahsy. The 29 Hadiths narrated by Ramlah binti Abu Sufyan, also known as Umm Habiba, are mentioned 138 times in the nine major Hadith collections.²⁹

Zainab is one of the female narrators who directly transmitted Hadiths from Prophet Muhammad. narrated 4 Hadiths, which are mentioned 26 times in the nine major Hadith collections. Compared to the other wives of the Prophet, Zainab binti Jahsy's narration is relatively few.³⁰ Safiyah binti Huyai, a figure among the Mothers of the Believers from a noble background with esteemed status, narrated 6 Hadiths, all directly from the Prophet. These six Hadiths are mentioned 25 times in the nine major Hadith collections.³¹ Juwairiyah, initially a captive after the Muslims defeated the Bani Musthaliq, married the Prophet and managed to free 100 families from her tribe. She narrated 4 Hadiths, mentioned 17 times in the nine major Hadith collections. Saudah binti Zam'ah bin Qais, known for her patience and long life as the Prophet's wife, narrated the fewest Hadiths, with 2 Hadiths mentioned nine times in the nine major Hadith collections, all directly from the Prophet.³²

Prophet Muhammad's Marital Conduct Narrated by Ummul Mukminin

The following are marital relations that occurred within the household of Prophet Muhammad, as narrated by Ummul Mukminin, including:

The Prophet Muhammad was never abusive to his wives

According to a hadith narrated by Aisha, the Prophet Muhammad never struck

Maktabah Syamilah versi, 2011.

28 Ibnu Athir and Izz al-Din, "Usd Al-GhabafiMa'rifat al-Sahaba," Cairo 62 (1970).

29 Athir and al-Din.

30 Ahmad bin 'Ali Ibn Hajar Al 'Asqalanī, *Al-Iṣṣabah Fī Tamyīz al-Sahabah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabi, n.d.).

31 Muhammad Husein Al Dzahabi, *Al-Kasyif Fi Ma'rifati Man Lahu Riwayah Fi Kutub al-Sittah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, n.d.).

32 Ibnu Sa'ad, *Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Dār al-Ṣādir, n.d.).

anyone with his hand—not his wives nor his servants—except in the conditions of war for the cause of Allah (HR Muslim;³³ HR Abu Dawud;³⁴ HR Ahmad³⁵). One of his teachings emphasized avoiding violence or beating in husband-wife relationships, a practice common in Arab society at that time. Historical accounts reveal that some companions of the Prophet behaved harshly, even violently, towards their wives. For instance, Zubair bin Awam, a companion who was among the first generation to embrace Islam and one of the ten companions promised Paradise, was known for his strict and jealous nature (HR Al-Tirmizī;³⁶ HR Ahmad³⁷). However, Zubair was reported to have committed violence against his wife, Asma bint Abu Bakr, even hitting her in front of their children, leading Asma to seek a divorce.³⁸ These instances highlight the contrast between the Prophet's teachings and practices and the actions of some companions, underlining his commitment to non-violence and respect.

In another hadith, it is recounted that the Prophet Muhammad and Aisha once had an argument during which Aisha raised her voice. The Prophet did not respond with scolding or violence. When Abu Bakr, Aisha's father, discovered that Aisha was speaking loudly to the Prophet, he wanted to scold and slap her. However, the Prophet intervened and prevented Abu Bakr from doing so, maintaining his calm and polite demeanor (HR Abu Dawud; HR Ahmad).³⁹ This incident further illustrates the Prophet's commitment to non-violence and respectful treatment within the household, even in moments of conflict. His actions serve as a model for maintaining composure and respect in marital relationships, emphasizing dialogue over aggression.

Domestic violence is a recurring theme in many hadiths and historical texts, reflecting the troubled state of marital relations in Arab society during the time. This context is particularly important as it highlights one of the prevalent issues in households, often triggered by the husband's treatment of his wife. The Prophet Muhammad actively taught against abusive behaviors and personally modeled these teachings in his own household, setting a standard of non-violence and respect.

33 Ausain Muslim, *Sahih Muslim* (Dar al-Tayyibah, 2006).

34 Sulayman b. al-Ash'ath b. Ishaq al-Azdi al-Sijistani Abu Dawud, *Sahih Sunan Abi Dawud/Taṣḥīh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani* (Riyadh: Maktab al-Tarbiyah al-'Arabī li-Duwal al-Khalij, 1989).

35 Musnad Ahmad

36 Muḥammad bin 'Īsā ibn Saurah Tirmizī, *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ Wa Huwa Sunan al-Tirmizī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1408).

37 Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad Ibn-Ḥanbal* (Beirut: Dar al Fikr, n.d.).

38 Sa'ad, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*.

39 See Sunan Abu Dawud number 5001, and Musnad Ahmad number 18685 & 18712

However, his admonitions were initially met with resistance from some men, who felt that their wives were becoming less obedient. Umar bin Khattab, a prominent companion of the Prophet, brought this issue to his attention, leading the Prophet to make a concession. He allowed for a non-painful symbolic strike as a disciplinary measure—a response to the societal norms and pressures of the time.

Despite this concession, the situation led to unintended consequences. Many women approached the Prophet to complain about their husbands' behavior. Seeing the distress it caused, the Prophet reiterated his stance against domestic violence, stating clearly that husbands who beat their wives are not to be considered good people (HR Abu Dawud; HR Ibn Majah).⁴⁰ This episode highlights the Prophet's efforts to advocate for kindness and equitable treatment within marriage, even as he navigated the complex social dynamics of his time. His ultimate condemnation of those who resorted to violence reinforces the core Islamic principle of compassion and respect between spouses.

The prohibition of wife beating within the household is underscored both in the hadith and by the personal example set by the Prophet Muhammad. Despite the allowance under specific, tightly constrained conditions mentioned in the Qur'an—such as symbolic non-hurtful beating as a last resort after other more gentle methods of resolution have failed—the Prophet consistently emphasized the prohibition against violence and the beating of women. One of the most potent demonstrations of the Prophet's stance came during the Farewell Sermon (*Khutbatul Wada'*), where he reiterated the importance of treating wives with kindness and respect. Furthermore, when Fatimah bint Qays, a female companion, sought the Prophet's advice regarding marriage proposals, he explicitly warned her against marrying a man known for his violent behavior (HR Muslim; HR Ahmad).⁴¹

Prophet Muhammad exemplified constructive communication within his household

Prophet Muhammad's household exemplified a model of two-way communication, where discussions and debates between him and his wives were common occurrences. Aisha, renowned for her curiosity, frequently sought clarification on various matters, ensuring her understanding was comprehensive and accurate. Moreover, other wives of the Prophet, such as Hafsa and Umm Salamah⁴²,

⁴⁰ See Sunan Abu Dawud number 2148 and Sunan Ibn Majah number 2061

⁴¹ See Sahih Muslim number 3785, 3786, Sunan Turmudzi number 1164, Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal number 27961

⁴² See Shahih Bukhari number 103, Sunan Abu Dawud number 3095, Sunan Turmudzi number 3660, Musnad Ahmad bin Hambal number 25598)

also actively engaged in debates and occasionally voiced their disagreements or protests (HR Bukhari;⁴³ HR Abu Dawud;⁴⁴ HR Tirmidhi;⁴⁵ HR Ahmad⁴⁶). These instances underscored the significance of open communication and mutual respect within marital relationships.

This communication pattern challenged prevalent norms in Arab society, where wives expressing dissent were often perceived as disobedient. Umar bin Khattab noted the transformative impact of Islam on women's rights, which were nonexistent during the Jahiliyah period until Allah revealed verses addressing women's rights. In a personal incident, Umar's wife responded to his views, which initially unsettled him. However, she reminded him of the Prophet's engagement in debates with their daughter Hafsa, leaving the Prophet upset. Hafsa confirmed she had indeed argued with the Prophet in the past (HR Bukhari; HR Muslim).⁴⁷

The Prophet's family's example inspired other couples to adopt similar communication patterns. When faced with disagreements, husbands could refer to the Prophet's household as a guide. By prioritizing listening and understanding their wives' concerns, husbands could foster a harmonious and respectful marital environment aligned with Islamic teachings. The Prophet's communication approach emphasized mutual respect, understanding, and partnership, ensuring both spouses felt valued and heard. This legacy continues to guide Muslims seeking to emulate the Prophet's marital example.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) deeply valued and respected women. This is evident in how he responded to complaints and even protests from his wives. Aisha and Umm Salama narrated incidents in which the Prophet addressed their concerns in hadiths they transmitted. Umm Salama questioned the position of women in Islam because the names of women are not mentioned as frequently as men in the Qur'an. Known for her courage and firmness, Umm Salama dared to question the Prophet regarding the position of men and women in Islam, expressing a sense of injustice when women were not mentioned frequently in the Qur'an. The Prophet responded to this concern by reciting Surah Al-Ahzab:35 in front of the congregation to reassure them that the positions of men and women in Islam are equal. This revelation from Allah was sent down in response to Ummu Salama's question.

43 Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl bin Ibrāhīm Abū 'Abd Allāh Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* (Dar wa Mathabi' al-Sya'b, n.d.).

44 Abu Dawud, *Sahih Sunan Abi Dawud/Taṣḥīḥ Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani*.

45 Tirmidzi, *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ Wa Huwa Sunan al-Tirmidzi*.

46 Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad Ibn-Ḥanbal*.

47 See Sahih Bukhari number 4962 and Sahih Muslim number 3765

Meanwhile, A'isha also posed questions to the Prophet, motivated by her desire for women to participate in jihad. The Prophet responded by stating that the most virtuous form of jihad for women is performing *Hajj Mabruur*. Furthermore, A'isha explicitly criticized misogynistic hadiths that demeaned women by comparing them to donkeys (HR Muslim).⁴⁸ Derived from this hadith, it can be seen how the Prophet Muhammad always responded appropriately to all complaints and protests from his wives. The Prophet always positioned women on an equal footing with men and never viewed women merely as objects, but rather as active subjects.

Prophet Muhammad allowed his wife to play a role in the public sphere.

There is no doubt that the Prophet Muhammad never limited women's activities to the domestic sphere. He exemplified this by allowing women to engage in public activities such as working, fighting, performing the *Hajj*, and worshiping in the mosque, all of which are positive and beneficial. While pre-Islamic women also participated in public activities, their opportunities were often restricted to those with high social status, and they were treated more as objects than subjects. In contrast, women during the Prophet's time were considered equal to men, even if they did not come from high social status. For example, in pre-Islamic times, women's role in warfare was limited to encouraging men, while during the Islamic period, women served as nurses, bandaging the wounded and caring for the dead, and even participated in the front line of battles.⁴⁹

Some of the public space activities carried out by the Prophet's wife include:

a. Prophet Muhammad gave his wives the freedom and encouragement to grow as individuals and seekers of knowledge.

Prophet Muhammad gave his wives the freedom and encouragement to grow as individuals and seekers of knowledge. His wives were allowed to pursue their own interests and goals. One day, according to hadith recounted by Hafsa bint Umar bin Khatab, the Prophet called for a female companion named As-Syifa, who was recognized for her exceptional healing abilities and fluency in reading and writing. Prophet Muhammad requested that As-Syifa educate his wife Hafsah in reading and writing, making Hafsah an educated woman of her era (HR Ahmad).⁵⁰ Hafsa continued her enthusiasm for knowledge until she became one of the most eloquent women among the Quraish. As a result, she became a key reference for

48 See Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Ṣalāt number 793, 794, 795)

49 Mernissi, *He Forgotten Queens of Islam*.

50 See in the Musnad Ahmad number 25245 and 25246

the companions of Prophet Muhammad regarding Islamic law, Nabawi hadiths, and worship. One of Hafsa's special qualities was her selection by Abu Bakar to safeguard the Quran that had been collected until the time of Usman when it was compiled into a single Mushaf. Hafsa was considered pious, knowledgeable, and devoted. Consequently, Hafsa became one of the prominent women in narrating the Prophet's hadiths.

b. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not prohibit his wives from engaging in economic activities.

Sayyida Khadijah, the first wife of the Prophet Muhammad, was an independent and wealthy businesswoman. As a well-known entrepreneur, Khadijah conducted various transactions with traders from different regions even before her marriage to the Prophet Muhammad. After marrying the Prophet, she continued her economic activities and became a primary supporter of his mission. During the early years of prophethood, Khadijah faced the challenges of preaching in secret and actively participated in the struggle, providing both moral and material support. She also endured a period when the economic blockade imposed by the Quraysh prevented her from trading and conducting economic activities.⁵¹

In addition to Khadijah, other wives of the Prophet Muhammad were also involved in economic activities, such as Zainab binti Jahsy and Saudah binti Zam'ah. Zainab was a craftswoman, and the proceeds from her efforts were used for charity in the path of Allah. Similarly, Saudah tanned hides of dead animals and turned them into leather goods. These activities are documented in hadiths narrated by the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (HR Muslim; HR Al-Tirmizī; HR Abu Dawud; HR Ahmad; HR Bukhārī).⁵²

c. The wives of Prophet Muhammad played a significant role in the public activities of spreading the message of Islam.

Their participation in public preaching activities included congregational prayers, both obligatory prayers (HR Ibn Majah; HR Bukhari; HR Ahmad; HR Al-Tirmizī, eclipse prayers (HR Bukhārī), funeral prayers, i'tikaf (HR Bukhārī) and

51 Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Malik bin Hisyam, *Al-Sīrah an-Nabawiyyah Li Ibnī Hisyām* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2009).

52 See in the Shahih Muslim number 2491, Sunan al-Turmudzi, number 1078, Sunan Abu Dawud, number 1839, Musnad Ahmad, number 14010, 14144, 14217, 14712, Shahih Bukhari number 6192, Sunan An-Nasa'I number 4167

pilgrimage (HR Bukhārī).⁵³ This once again demonstrates how women were given the freedom to engage in activities outside the home. All these activities are narrated by the wives of Prophet Muhammad in the hadiths they transmitted. A narration by A'isha mentions that when the Prophet performed the Fajr prayer, the women who prayed in congregation covered their faces in such a way that no one could recognize them because it was still dark (Bukhārī).⁵⁴

d. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always invited his wives in turns when setting out for battles or journeys.

This practice is narrated in a hadith by A'isha, where before embarking on a journey, the Prophet would draw lots to determine which of his wives would accompany him. Among the battles Aisha participated in were the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of the Trench (Khandaq), and the Battle against the Banu Mustaliq. Aisha recounted these experiences in the hadiths she transmitted (HR Bukhārī; HR Muslim; HR Ahmad; HR Ibn Majah).⁵⁵

The Battle against the Mustaliq tribe left a deep impression on Aisha. Led directly by the Prophet, the Muslims emerged victorious, disrupting the Banu Mustaliq. Some were killed, and others were taken as prisoners of war. One of the captives was Juwairiyah bint Haris, the daughter of the leader of the Banu Mustaliq, Haris bin Dhihar.⁵⁶ Juwairiyah sought her freedom by paying a ransom. Subsequently, the Prophet married Juwairiyah, and after this marriage, the Muslims released all the captives from the Banu Mustaliq. Meanwhile, after returning from the war, Aisha faced a trial in the form of slander directed towards her. This slander led the Prophet (PBUH) to consider divorcing A'isha. However, Allah responded to this event by revealing a revelation that refuted the accusations. Aisha then narrated this incident in a hadith that she transmitted. Hadiths about this event can be found in almost all of the major hadith collections (HR Bukhārī; HR Muslim; HR Ahmad).⁵⁷

53 See Shahih Bukhari number 84, 359, 544, 830, 825, 1513, 1727, 1896, 1892, shahih Muslim 1513, 1727 1509, 2007, Sunan al-Turmudzi number 141, Sunan al-Nasa'I number 542, 543, 1345, Sunan Ibnu Majah number hadis 661, Musnad Ahmad number 22922, 22967, 24282, 24915, 25025, Muwatha' number hadis 3, Sunan al-Darimy number 1190.

54 See Shahih Bukhari number 359

55 See *Sahih Bukhari* number 2667, 6382,, 6375 *Sahih Muslim* number 3375, 3376, *Sunan al-Turmudzi* number 1500, *Sunan Abu Dawud* number 2168, *Musnad Ahmad* number 13538.

56 Sa'ad, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*.

57 See *Sahih Bukhari* number 2467, *Sahih Muslim* number 4417, 4974, *Sunan Abu Dawud* number 1826, *Sunan Ibnu Majah* number 1960, 2338, *Musnad Ahmad* number 2390, 23714, 24444, 25110, and *Sunan al-Darimi* number 2111, 2316

e. The wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were actively involved in social activities during his time.

Like other women in the community, the Prophet's wives participated in various social activities, including collaboration during celebrations (HR Muslim), providing places and food for guests, and offering services to the community.

Prophet Muhammad Being Romantic to the Wife

In his role as a husband, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exemplified the ideal husband by not only respecting and listening to the concerns of his wives but also providing them space to engage in public activities. Moreover, he was a romantic husband to his wives, a quality frequently recounted by his wives in the hadiths they narrated. Among these instances are: Sharing a blanket and bathing from the same tub (HR Bukhārī)⁵⁸, Being affectionate with the Prophet (PBUH) while he was fasting (HR Bukhari)⁵⁹, Being affectionate when the wife is menstruating (HR Bukhārī).⁶⁰

The hadith narrated by Ummul Mukminin describes how Prophet Muhammad's relationships with his wives were egalitarian and equal. There were no restrictions on the activities of his wives in public spaces. Prophet Muhammad provided opportunities and encouragement for his wives to engage in public activities and contribute to society. The Ummul Mukminin (the Mothers of the Believers) were known to express their views, engage in discussions, and even debate with the Prophet on various issues, including matters related to the relationship between men and women. Prophet Muhammad's significant attention to women's issues in Arabian society is highlighted. Moreover, during his farewell pilgrimage (*Hajj Wada'*), he delivered several messages to the Muslim community, emphasizing the importance of balanced relationships (*mubadalah*) in marital life and treating wives with kindness.

One of the messages conveyed during the Farewell Sermon is particularly focused on the treatment of women. Prophet Muhammad advised believers to always treat women with kindness, acknowledging their vulnerable position. He emphasized that believers have no right to mistreat women unless they engage in clear misconduct. In such cases, separation should occur, but physical harm should be avoided. The Prophet stressed the mutual rights and responsibilities between husbands and wives, urging fair treatment in terms of clothing, food, and overall behavior.

Gender Equality in The Family from The Hadith Perspective

⁵⁸ See Shahih Bukhari number 253, 255

⁵⁹ See *Sahih Bukhari* number 1792

⁶⁰ See *Sahih Bukhari*, nomor hadis 286, 287

The patterns of gender relations within families are closely tied to the social and cultural constructs of a society. These components mutually influence each other. The understanding of subjects and objects, the division of roles between men and women, the types of work commonly performed by each gender, and other aspects of daily life are outcomes of the established gender relation patterns.

Historically, particularly in pre-Islamic times, women were often seen as inferior. Historical evidence shows numerous practices resulting from unequal gender relations, such as the burial of female infants and the view of women as inheritable property.⁶¹ Despite these conditions, some pre-Islamic Arab women, particularly those of high social status, played significant roles in public spaces.⁶² However, overall, the status of women was concerning. Various traditions in pre-Islamic Arab society shaped the relationship between men and women.

The introduction of Islam as a new religion in the Arabian Peninsula did not instantly change all existing traditions and cultures; rather, these changes occurred gradually. Islam integrated and adapted previous traditions to align with its perspective, building on the values of local Arab traditions and possibly earlier teachings.⁶³ Establishing equal gender relations in that era was challenging. The new teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, which aimed to give women more rights, faced opposition from many of his companions. For example, there was resistance when women were granted inheritance rights, even if only half of what men received. Umar bin al-Khattab was notably opposed. Similarly, some companions, including Umar, expressed dissatisfaction when Arab wives began to assert themselves and respond to their husbands.⁶⁴

The Prophet Muhammad addressed these challenges with wisdom, often exemplifying equal relations within his family. From the hadith perspective, gender equality in the family is reflected in narratives by the Ummul Mukminin (the Mothers of Believers). The family, as the smallest social institution, is formed through marriage. Hadiths describe marriage as part of worship (HR Bukhārī), a means to perfect one's faith (HR Ahmad), and emphasize that the best among people are those who are good to their families (HR Al-Tirmizī; HR Abu Dawūd).

Marriage, as the union of two individuals, should have a common purpose for both parties. In this context, the husband and wife should work together

61 Maḥmūd Syukri Al Ālūsī, *Bulūḡ Al-'Arab Fī Ma'Rifat Ahwāl al-'Arab*, n.d.

62 Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (Veritas Paperbacks, 2021).

63 Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender Perspektif Al-Qur'an*.

64 Memissi, *He Forgotten Queens of Islam*.

harmoniously. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of upholding the rights of both husbands and wives during his farewell Sermon (*khutbatul wada'*).

Amr bin Ahwash RA participated in the farewell Pilgrimage (*Hajj Wada'*) with the Prophet Muhammad. During his speech, the Prophet praised Allah, reminded his followers of their duties, and offered guidance. Notably, he stressed the importance of treating women with kindness and respect, recognizing their vulnerable position. He urged individuals to do good to women, avoiding harmful actions unless a severe transgression occurred. In such cases, he advised a temporary separation and a measured, non-injurious response. The Prophet highlighted the reciprocal rights and responsibilities between spouses, emphasizing mutual respect and care. He urged husbands to ensure their wives are well-treated, including providing for their clothing and food needs. Additionally, he emphasized maintaining a harmonious household environment, where neither spouse feels discomfort or resentment.⁶⁵

During the farewell pilgrimage, known as the *Khutbatul Wada'*, the Prophet Muhammad delivered multiple messages to his followers. According to the book of *Sirah Nabawiyah*, he began his speech by addressing the gathered crowd solemnly, saying, "O people, listen attentively to my words, for I am uncertain whether I will have the opportunity to address you again in this place next year." This statement hinted that the Prophet was performing *Hajj* for the final time. Ibn Ishaq described how the *Khutbatul Wada'* was delivered by the Prophet Muhammad at Arafat. As the Prophet spoke, Rabi'ah bin Umayyah bin Khalaf echoed his words, ensuring that all Muslims present could hear the message clearly.

In the *Khutbatul Wada'*, Prophet Muhammad underscored the importance of treating women with respect and fulfilling the reciprocal rights of both husbands and wives. He emphasized that husbands must fulfill the rights of their wives, just as wives must fulfill the rights of their husbands. Furthermore, neither husbands nor wives should harm each other, but rather, they should treat each other with kindness and consideration.⁶⁶

According to Syafi'i, as quoted by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, the practice of hitting wives had become a cultural norm in Arab society until the Quranic verse addressing the issue was revealed. Although the Quran permits hitting women in cases of serious misconduct, it emphasizes that any physical discipline should be limited to a non-painful blow. Syafi'i suggests that such disciplinary action should only be considered as a last resort, aimed at correcting behavior related to disobedience to Allah.

65 Abdullah Muhammad bin Yazid bin Abdullah bin Majah Al Quzwaini, *Sunan Ibnu Majah*, 2004.

66 Syekh Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar al-Mutholib al Madani, *Sirah Nabawiyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2004).

Ibn Hajar, in his renowned work *Fathul Bari*, argues that excessive wife-beating is inconceivable for individuals of sound judgment. He contends that healthy intimate relationships thrive on affection, mutual respect, and enjoyment in interactions. Physical violence undermines these foundational aspects, as it breeds resentment and diminishes the bond between partners. Even in cases where disciplinary measures are deemed necessary, Ibn Hajar advocates for moderation, suggesting that any physical reprimand should be administered lightly to prevent estrangement.⁶⁷

Furthermore, Ibn Hajar highlights the Prophet Muhammad as the epitome of virtuous conduct in marital relations. He emphasizes that the Prophet, in his exemplary behavior, never resorted to physical violence against his wives or servants. This stance not only underscores the Prophet's compassion and respect for others but also serves as a model for believers to emulate in their own relationships (HR *Al-Nasa'i*)⁶⁸.

Equal relations between spouses within a family will occur if they are based on several aspects, as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad: (1) Positioning women, particularly wives, as equal partners rather than objects, and refraining from condescension, insults, or tyranny, is a principle strongly emphasized by the Prophet Muhammad. This principle is not only evident in the teachings of hadith but also exemplified in his own household practices (HR Muslim; HR *Al-Tirmidhi*; HR Ahmad).⁶⁹ The demeaning and oppressive treatment often observed stems from a failure to regard the spouse as an equal. This attitude prevailed in Arab society at the time, perpetuating the notion of women as mere objects or second-class citizens. Such beliefs entrenched the idea of men as inherently superior, enjoying special privileges solely by virtue of their gender. (2) Acknowledging the rights of women (HR *Bukhārī*).⁷⁰ Acknowledging women's rights, as highlighted in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (HR Bukhari), was a pivotal aspect of his message, particularly in a society where entrenched traditions relegated women to the status of inheritable possessions, entirely dependent on men. In the pre-Islamic era, women were viewed merely as commodities, subjected to forced marriages, inheritance practices, unrestricted polygamy, and even used as collateral for debts. However, with the advent of Islam, significant changes occurred, recognizing and affirming

67 Ahmad bin 'Alī Ibn Hajar Al 'Asqalanī, *Fathul Bari Sharh Shahih Bukhari* (Riyadh: Dar al-Tibah, 2005).

68 Abi Abd Rahman Ahmad bin Syu'aib Al Nasa'i, *Sunan Al-Nasa'i* (Kairo: Jam'iyyah al-Mikbar al-Islami, 1421).

69 Please see in the Shahih Muslim number 6706, Sunan Al-Turmudzi number 2052, musnad Ahmad numbers 7842, 8218, 8843, and 16265

70 See in the Sunan Al-Turmudzi number 113, musnad Imam Ahmad number 26836 & 27762.

the rights of women as equal to those of men.

Aisha's profound statement, "Women are the siblings of men," underscores the intrinsic humanity of women, demanding acknowledgment, respect, protection, and the fulfillment of their inherent rights to life. Just as the Prophet exemplified through his actions, not only treating his wives with kindness but also providing them with ample opportunities and autonomy.

One of the rights that wives are entitled to is the right to sexual satisfaction from their husbands. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, some female companions expressed grievances about not receiving adequate satisfaction in their sexual relations. In the prevailing Arab tradition, marital relationships often saw men holding dominance and enjoying full rights to sexual pleasure without due consideration for their wives' needs. Moreover, there were instances where some of the Prophet's companions became overly engrossed in acts of worship, such as fasting and praying extensively, to the extent that they neglected the rights of their wives. For example, Abdullah bin Amr, a companion who fasted continuously and prayed extensively, overlooked his wife's rights until the Prophet admonished him for this oversight. Recognizing the importance of maintaining balance and fulfilling familial obligations, the Prophet emphasized in a hadith that individuals have obligations to fulfill not only towards themselves but also towards their families, including their wives (HR Bukhari).⁷¹

In his book *Fathul Bari*, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani emphasizes the importance of balance in worship and fulfilling marital obligations. He highlights that it is inappropriate for a husband to exhaust himself in worship to the extent that he becomes unable to fulfill his wife's rights, including providing for her livelihood and meeting her sexual needs. Ibn Hajar also discusses the opinions of various Imams regarding a husband who refuses to have intercourse with his wife. According to Imam Malik⁷² and Imam Ahmad⁷³, if this refusal is due to a valid emergency condition, the husband is either required to seek treatment for the condition or the couple may separate. However, Imam Shafi'i is of the opinion that there is no obligation for the husband to engage in intercourse. Other scholars have varying opinions, with some stating that intercourse is obligatory once, while others suggest it should occur on each of the four nights or on each occasion of purity.⁷⁴

Al-Khathabi draws a conclusion from the hadith concerning Abdullah bin

⁷¹ See Shahih Bukhari number 1977, 5199.

⁷² Malik bin Anas, *Muwatha Imam Malik* (Al-Muassasah al-Risalah, 1998).

⁷³ Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad Ibn-Ḥanbal*.

⁷⁴ 'Asqalanī, *Al-Iṣābah Fī Tamyīz al-Sahabah*.

Amr, who excessively fasted and prayed to the extent of neglecting his wife. He underscores that while fasting is indeed a significant act of worship, Allah does not solely require fasting from individuals but also other forms of worship. Intense focus on fasting may lead to a reduction in other acts of worship. Therefore, al-Khathabi suggests that the ideal approach is to adopt moderation in worship, including fasting. By maintaining a balanced approach, individuals ensure that they have the strength and capacity to fulfill all their religious obligations, including those related to family and marital responsibilities. This moderation allows for the harmonious fulfillment of both spiritual and worldly duties.

This Hadith indicates that fasting continuously is not desirable. Many scholars consider fasting all the time to be disliked (*makruh*), as the Hadith mentions that the Prophet forbade fasting more than the fast of the Prophet David. Additionally, there is a Hadith where the Prophet prayed for the destruction of those who fasted continuously. Fasting continuously is feared to lead to neglect of other rights, including the rights of one's wife.⁷⁵ Therefore, in relation to the rights of the wife, continuous worship is prohibited if it results in neglecting the rights of the wife. The Prophet, in his own household life, was very concerned about maintaining a balance and ensuring that the rights of all individuals, including wives, were fulfilled.

Mu'asarah bil Ma'ruf, or building good relationships between husband and wife and other family members, is an important aspect of Islamic teachings (HR Muslim; HR Ahmad; HR Abu Dawud).⁷⁶ The Prophet Muhammad set a perfect example of this by demonstrating exemplary behavior towards his spouse. For instance, he would never come home late at night and would always knock on the door to avoid disturbing his family or wife, who might be sleeping. Additionally, the Prophet prohibited *'azl* (coitus interruptus) without his wife's permission and discouraged polygamy when Ali bin Abi Thalib intended to marry Fatimah. These actions were aimed at fostering comfort and harmony in marital interactions.⁷⁷ The Prophet exemplified a monogamous household life with Khadijah for 23 years, despite the prevailing tradition in Arab society of having multiple wives. This choice highlights the Prophet's preference for monogamy and his commitment to building a strong, harmonious relationship with his spouse.

Mu'asarah bil Ma'ruf in the household was carried out by the Prophet because the Prophet really respected and appreciated women (HR Al-Tirmizi; HR

75 'Asqalanī, *Al-Iṣābah Fī Tamyīz al-Sahabah*.

76 See in the Shahih Bukhari number 1828, 5285, Shahih Muslim number 5071, and Sunan Abu Dawud number 2461, 2073

77 Kodir, *Qira'ah Mubadalah: Tafsir Progresif Untuk Keadilan Gender Islam*.

Abu Dawud; HR Ahmad).⁷⁸ The Prophet was known as a husband who was never violent (HR Muslim; HR Ahmad HR Abu Dawud).⁷⁹ Prophet Muhammad also always did The deliberation for goodness (HR Bukhārī; HR Muslim; HR Abu Dawud; HR Al-Tirmizī).⁸⁰ The Prophet demonstrated how his wives had the right to voice their opinions, ask questions, make critical comments, raise objections, and the Prophet did not object. This indicates two-way communication or consultation in the family life of Prophet Muhammad.

Hence, Prophet Muhammad's exemplary conduct in managing the household according to principles of equality stands as a remarkable departure from the norms prevalent in Arab society at the time. His actions conveyed messages and provided tangible examples of household management rooted in principles of equality. In conclusion, following the established pattern of family relationships, based on the principles exemplified by the Prophet, fosters an environment of equality and harmony. Husbands and wives emerge as partners, each fulfilling complementary roles and supporting each other's weaknesses. This relationship is characterized by mutual empowerment and the promotion of virtue, steering clear of any form of dominance or inequality. Consequently, both men and women assume equal standing within the family unit.

Conclusion

This research highlights the significant contribution of the Hadiths narrated by Ummul Mukminin (Mothers of the Believers) to the understanding of gender equality within the family from an Islamic perspective. Through a detailed content analysis of these Hadiths, the study reveals that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) promoted principles of equality and justice within his household, challenging the prevailing patriarchal norms of Arab society at the time. The Hadiths demonstrate instances where the Prophet engaged in respectful and non-violent interactions with his wives, encouraged open communication, and supported their participation in public and economic activities. These findings underscore the Prophet's commitment to establishing a model of marital relations based on mutual respect, compassion, and equality.

The research also delves into the broader implications of the Hadiths narrated

⁷⁸ See in the Shahih Bukhari number 6061, 1439, Shahih Muslim 6862, Sunan Al-Turmudzi number 2039, Musnad Ahmad 24689, 25211 and 26700

⁷⁹ See Shahih Muslim number 6195, Sunan Abu Dawud number 4788, Musnad Ahmad number 26354, 26596 and 27047

⁸⁰ See in the Shahih Bukhari number 103 dan 4962, Shahih Muslim number 4962, Sunan Abu Dawud number 3095, and sunan Al-Turmudzi number 3660

by Ummul Mukminin for modern gender relations within the family. It emphasizes how these teachings can serve as a foundation for promoting gender equality in contemporary Islamic families. By reinterpreting these Hadiths in the context of modern values, the study advocates for a balanced and equitable partnership between spouses. It highlights the Prophet's emphasis on mutual rights and responsibilities, non-violence, and constructive communication as key components of a harmonious marital relationship. The research also addresses the challenges of historical and cultural biases in the interpretation of Islamic texts and calls for a progressive approach to understanding gender roles in Islam.

While this study provides valuable insights into gender equality within the family from an Islamic perspective, there are several areas that warrant further exploration. The research primarily focuses on the Hadiths narrated by Ummul Mukminin, but future studies could expand the scope to include a comprehensive analysis of all Hadiths related to gender relations. Additionally, the study could benefit from a comparative analysis of gender equality in Islamic jurisprudence and its application in different cultural contexts. Further research could also explore the impact of contemporary feminist interpretations of Islamic texts on gender equality within Muslim communities. These areas of inquiry would contribute to a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics of gender relations in Islam and offer practical solutions for addressing gender inequality in modern society.

Supplementary Materials

The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references).

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Authors' contributions

All listed authors contributed to this article. Z.N wrote the original draft, reviewed and edited it, and wrote the formal analysis, compiled the resources, conceptualised the study, and managed the project administration. N.F was responsible for the methodology and validation and supervised the project

Data availability statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created

or analysed in this study.

Conflicts of Interest

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

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