

Women's Spiritual Agency in Marriage: Enhancing Husbands' Religiosity in Contemporary Contexts

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the role of wives in enhancing their husbands' religiosity in modern Muslim families, particularly in Padangsidempuan City. Viewing the family as a spiritual institution, the research explores how religious values are cultivated through daily interaction, exemplary conduct, and meaningful communication. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, it draws on a literature review and in-depth interviews with five Muslim married couples, analyzed thematically to reveal patterns of the wife's spiritual influence. The findings show that a wife's devotion in worship, moral behavior, and positive religious communication significantly strengthen her husband's religiosity. Her exemplary conduct and empathetic communication create a religious atmosphere that nurtures spiritual awareness at home. Modern wives who balance domestic and professional roles also contribute to the family's spiritual resilience. Thus, the wife's role embodies *dakwah bil hal*, serving as a spiritual catalyst who inspires her husband's piety and supports a harmonious, faith-centered family.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the Islamic perspective, the family is not merely a shared place of residence but a spiritual institution that plays a vital role in shaping the religious character and moral values of each individual. Within the family, particularly in the relationship between husband and wife, religious values are instilled, nurtured, and developed through daily interactions. It has been emphasized that a person's religious dynamism is deeply influenced by the spiritual atmosphere within the family. This means that the example and support of a spouse (especially the wife) can serve as a major factor in strengthening the husband's religious consciousness (Kusrini, 2022).

Islamic teachings regard marriage as a sacred institution and an act of worship. Allah Almighty explains in *Surah Ar-Rum* (30:21) that the marital relationship is founded upon tranquility (*sakinah*), love (*mawaddah*), and compassion (*rahmah*). These values can only

be realized when both spouses possess strong spiritual awareness. In this regard, the wife's role is significant—not only as a companion in social life but also as a spiritual guide for her husband. In line with this view, a pious wife serves as the main support in shaping her husband's devotion, since the peace and stability of a household largely depend on the strength of faith of both partners (Nasrulloh, 2024).

In the modern era, technological advancement, demanding work patterns, and the wave of secularization often cause husbands to experience a decline in religious motivation. In the modern era, rapid technological progress, tight work schedules, and the growing influence of secular values often lead many husbands to experience a decline in their religious enthusiasm. This situation is also reflected in the everyday life of Padangsidempuan, a city long known for its strong Islamic traditions yet now increasingly shaped by urban development and changing lifestyle patterns. As living costs rise and work demands intensify particularly for those engaged in trade, transportation, and various service sectors many husbands struggle to allocate sufficient time for spiritual reflection and regular religious observance.

The widespread use of digital entertainment, the dominance of social media culture, and the rise of consumer-oriented habits within the urban community of Padangsidempuan further contribute to a gradual weakening of religious commitment, especially among men who spend most of their time outside the home. In this context, the wife's presence becomes even more essential in revitalizing her husband's spiritual motivation whether through emotional encouragement, gentle reminders for worship, or by nurturing an atmosphere of faith within the household.

In numerous families across Padangsidempuan, women naturally take the lead in sustaining religious practices at home, such as reminding family members to perform prayers on time, encouraging regular Qur'an recitation, and ensuring that Islamic values guide daily interactions. These realities highlight that a wife's spiritual influence continues to play a crucial role in strengthening her husband's religiosity, particularly in the midst of the complex social challenges of contemporary life.

In such conditions, the presence of a wife who actively maintains the spiritual atmosphere of the family becomes essential. Through exemplary worship practices, courteous communication, and moral encouragement, a wife can influence her husband to restore and strengthen his spiritual relationship with Allah Almighty. A study shows that religious support from the wife—such as inviting the husband to worship together and demonstrating patience—can significantly improve the husband's level of religiosity (Selvia et al., 2024).

Apart from being a role model, active religious communication also plays a significant role in shaping the spirituality of both partners. It is stated that families who make religious discussions part of their daily interactions tend to exhibit higher levels of harmony and worship commitment. This demonstrates that a wife who can initiate spiritual communication, gently remind her husband, and create a religious home environment acts as a catalyst in enhancing her husband's religious commitment (Yuan, 2025)

Furthermore, the wife's role in nurturing her husband's religiosity is not merely a moral responsibility but also an act of devotion to Allah Almighty and a form of *dakwah bil hal* (preaching through exemplary behavior). This aligns with the saying of the Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him): “The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best among you to my family.” (*Hadith narrated by Tirmidhi*)

This hadith emphasizes that a husband’s religiosity cannot be separated from the influence of a spiritually grounded family environment. Therefore, examining the wife’s role in enhancing her husband’s religiosity is essential for strengthening the spiritual foundation of the household and building a more religious society. The importance of the wife’s role in supporting her husband’s spirituality reflects the function of the family as an institution that fulfills not only material needs but also spiritual needs in accordance with Islamic teachings (Abidin, 2025).

In this context, the wife serves as a spiritual guide who not only provides emotional support to her husband but also strengthens the family’s religious bond (Putri & Andaryuni, 2024). According to Emile Durkheim, religion plays an essential role as a means of fostering solidarity and social cohesion in human life. At the family level, the wife holds a central position in maintaining family cohesion through the application of religious values in daily life. She plays an important role in nurturing an atmosphere of compassion (*rahmah*) and inner peace (*sakinah*), as explained in *Surah Ar-Rum* [30]:21.

Moreover, the wife acts as a transmitter of spiritual values through empathy, patience, and religiously inspired communication—such as encouraging her husband to pray before work or to forgive one another after disagreements. Thus, religion functions as a unifying and binding force in family life, where the wife serves as the key agent in preserving and cultivating these values.

Therefore, strengthening the wife’s role in the family’s spiritual life is crucial for creating a harmonious environment that supports the moral and character development of all family members (Faqih & Yusuf, 2023). Enhancing the wife’s role in supporting her husband’s religiosity can strengthen marital harmony, which ultimately has a positive impact on the overall well-being and stability of the family. By reinforcing the wife’s contribution to her husband’s spiritual development, not only does the quality of the marital relationship improve, but a more harmonious and spiritually prosperous family atmosphere is also established.

2. METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through two primary techniques: library research and in depth interviews (Creswell, 2002). The library research involves a review of various scholarly sources such as books, journals, and Qur’anic exegesis, while the in-depth interviews were conducted with five Muslim married couples residing in Padangsidempuan City. The combination of these two techniques provides a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under study from both theoretical and empirical perspectives.

This approach also takes into account the socio-cultural context of the Padangsidempuan community, where religious practices and family dynamics are strongly influenced by traditional values and distinctive Islamic understandings. The researcher aims to present the reality as it is, without intervention or data manipulation. This is consistent with the view that qualitative research is naturalistic, focusing on the meanings

derived from participant's lived experiences. Therefore, the researcher functions as the main instrument in the process of data collection and interpretation.

The selection of the five Muslim married couples in this study was carried out through purposive sampling, allowing the researcher to focus on participants who could genuinely illuminate the spiritual dynamics within marriage. This method is consistent with the goals of qualitative research, which values depth, nuance, and meaningful insight over numerical representation. Each couple was chosen based on how well their experiences aligned with the phenomenon being explored.

One of the main criteria was a minimum marriage duration of five years, ensuring that the participants had passed the early adjustment stage and were living in a more stable marital phase where patterns of religiosity were clearer. The husbands' varying levels of religious commitment—from highly observant to moderate or inconsistent—were also taken into account to capture a wide range of experiences regarding how a wife's spiritual role can shape her husband's religiosity. Their diverse occupations, including work in trade, education, government service, transportation, and private sectors, reflect the socio-economic realities of Padangsidempuan and how these factors influence religious routines.

The couples were also selected based on their readiness and comfort in discussing personal aspects of their marital and spiritual lives. Input from local community figures and initial observations helped the researcher identify participants who could offer rich, insightful narratives. These information-rich couples provided valuable perspectives on how wives contribute to strengthening their husbands' religious awareness within the unique cultural and religious environment of Padangsidempuan City.

All analyses were conducted inductively, meaning that themes and categories were not predetermined by theory but emerged naturally from the field data. This approach allows the researcher to understand participants' realities in a more authentic and contextual manner (Sugiono, 2015). Consequently, the thematic analysis provides a rich understanding of the wife's role enhancing the husband's religiosity and the spiritual relationship within Muslim household's in Padangsidempuan City.

The library research was conducted to obtain theoretical foundations and key concepts, including: religiosity within the family, the role of wives in Islam, theories of interpersonal influence, and contemporary studies on spiritual relationships between spouses. As noted by Zed (2014), library research is the process of gathering theoretical data through scholarly literature to establish a solid conceptual framework. Sugiyono (2020) further highlights that literature review is essential for identifying key variables and ensuring that field research is well-directed.

The study was conducted in Padangsidempuan City, a region known for its strong religious identity and deeply rooted Islamic cultural values among the *Angkola*/Mandailing Muslim community.

Following the embedded context principle proposed by Creswell (2018), site selection must consider socio-cultural conditions relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. The local context significantly shapes religious practices, gender roles, and spousal dynamics, making the city an appropriate setting for studying family religiosity.

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument. As explained by Moleong (2019), the researcher is the central tool responsible for data collection, analysis, interpretation, and drawing conclusions—because only humans are

capable of grasping meaning, understanding context, and interpreting social phenomena. Sugiyono (2020) reinforces this perspective, stating that the researcher acts as planner, executor, data collector, analyzer, interpreter, and reporter of research findings. Additional instruments, such as interview guides, observation sheets, and field notes, were also used to enhance the precision and reliability of the data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

The Concept of Religiosity

The study of religiosity is an important theme in the sociology of religion, maintaining its relevance in understanding the religious behavior of both individuals and social groups. The reality that religiosity comprises multiple dimensions indicates that it is not a singular concept but rather a combination of interrelated dimensions forming a unified spiritual experience. The five main dimensions belief, practice, religious experience, knowledge, and moral consequence demonstrate that religion is not merely a set of doctrines, but also a way of life that influences human social and moral behavior.

In Islamic teachings, religiosity is reflected through a balance between the vertical relationship with Allah (*ḥablun min Allāh*) and the horizontal relationship with fellow human beings (*ḥablun min an-nās*). These two aspects strengthen one another in shaping the character of a complete Muslim. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others.” (Narrated by Ahmad)

The dimension of belief is the core of all forms of religiosity. It refers to faith in the fundamental teachings of religion, such as belief in Allah, angels, scriptures, prophets, the Day of Judgment, and destiny (*qadar*). According to a study titled *The Role of Islamic Education in the Family Environment (intiqaad)*, belief serves as an internal moral compass that forms the foundation of a person’s religious behavior. Within the family context, the strong faith of a wife plays a vital role in shaping the spiritual character of her husband and children through example, gentle advice, and religiously infused communication. A wife who upholds her faith becomes a source of tranquility and moral strength for the family, especially when facing household challenges or life trials (Putra et al., 2023).

Meanwhile, the practice dimension represents the tangible manifestation of faith. It encompasses both ritual worship (such as prayer, fasting, and *zakat*) and social worship, including charity and mutual assistance. *The Juris* notes that performing worship together within the family setting strengthens spiritual and emotional bonds among family members. Husbands and wives who regularly perform acts of worship collectively are more likely to develop empathy, mutual respect, and unity in navigating household dynamics. In the digital era, religious practices have evolved through online platforms such as virtual religious gatherings and collective prayers, extending the reach of family spirituality without diminishing the essence of togetherness (Putri & Andaryuni, 2024).

The religious experience dimension focuses on the inner and emotional aspects of religious life. This experience reflects one’s sense of closeness to God and awareness of His presence in everyday life. Mahoney’s research emphasizes that religious experience represents the depth of one’s faith, which cannot be measured solely by the frequency of ritual activities. Within the family, religious experience can be seen when a husband and

wife pray for each other, express gratitude together for Allah's blessings, and support one another through difficult times (Mahoney et al., 2003). According to the *Journal of Social Science and Religion*, couples who share religious experiences tend to develop greater spiritual resilience, enabling them to face life's pressures with calmness and gratitude. This shows that religiosity is not merely formal religious activity, but also a psychological strength that sustains family harmony (Fauziah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the knowledge and moral consequence dimensions indicate that true religiosity must be accompanied by a deep understanding of religious values and the application of ethics in daily life. Shah states that a person demonstrates mature religiosity when they can interpret religious teachings contextually and use them as a guide for being fair, honest, and responsible. In the family setting, the wife plays a strategic role in instilling these moral values in her husband and children for instance, by encouraging diligence, simplicity, and honesty in earning a livelihood. Such religiosity ensures that spiritual values do not stop at ritual practice but are embodied in ethical and social behavior that benefits the family and the wider community (Shah & Aung, 2022).

Scientific Analysis and Contextual Relevance

In contemporary developments, the theory of religiosity has expanded through the approaches of psychology of religion and digital religiosity. This framework emphasizes that modern religiosity should be understood as a balance between spiritual, social, and emotional aspects, as well as individual engagement in the increasingly broad digital religious space (Arystanbaeva & Kasimova, 2025).

Meanwhile, the reality of religious life shows that families who cultivate meaningful religious values rather than focusing solely on ritual formality tend to have stronger emotional and social resilience. These findings indicate that effective religiosity in the modern era is flexible, dynamic, and contextually responsive to social change, while still maintaining the fundamental values of Islam (Datuzuhriah, 2024)

Therefore, Glock and Stark's theoretical model remains relevant for understanding religious behavior within contemporary Muslim households. In the Muslim family context—particularly through the wife's role religiosity functions as a means of moral formation for the husband, spiritual communication strengthening, and emotional-social balance based on Islamic values. By emphasizing three core dimensions knowledge, experience, and morality religiosity serves as a solid foundation for realizing a family that embodies *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* in accordance with Islamic ideals.

The interviews conducted in Padangsidempuan show several patterns of religious life within families that both affirm and expand upon Glock and Stark's theoretical framework. One of the most prominent findings is the strong presence of shared religious activities at home, such as regular Qur'an recitation, evening dhikr, and praying together as a family. These practices are often encouraged or even initiated by the wife, who not only reminds her husband but also demonstrates consistent religious behavior herself. Such routines reflect the experiential and ritual dimensions described by Glock and Stark, indicating that these collective acts of worship help strengthen the husband's spiritual commitment.

The interviews also reveal that wives often act as the main source of religious learning in their households. Many women introduce Islamic teachings through storytelling, simple study sessions, or by motivating their husbands to join community religious gatherings. This

supports the intellectual aspect of religiosity, showing that religious knowledge today is shaped not only by formal institutions but also by the wife's intentional efforts to nurture understanding at home. This slightly reshapes the original model by highlighting the wife not external religious authorities as a central figure in the family's religious education.

Another important finding is the wife's influence on her husband's moral and emotional well-being, especially in families facing economic challenges or work-related stress. Wives frequently offer emotional support, ethical reminders, and encouragement grounded in Islamic teachings. This aligns with the moral dimension in Glock and Stark's model, illustrating how religiosity in Padangsidempuan is deeply tied to maintaining harmony, patience, and respectful communication in the household. Through everyday decision-making guided by Islamic ethics, wives help reinforce their husbands' moral direction.

Overall, these findings confirm that Glock and Stark's model remains relevant for explaining religious behavior within Muslim families today. Yet, the context of Padangsidempuan adds an important layer: the wife's spiritual role is more prominent and consistent than the model explicitly suggests. By combining religious understanding, lived spiritual practices, and moral guidance, religiosity becomes a strong foundation for creating families that embody *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, in line with Islamic ideals.

Although Glock and Stark's five-dimensional framework continues to be widely applied as a primary theoretical model, recent studies highlight necessary contextual adaptations of each dimension to align with contemporary social and cultural realities. Research findings in Indonesia, such as Guntoro's study in *Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Budaya*, indicate that social-religious dimensions including community participation in worship and religious gatherings have a stronger influence than personal belief in shaping religiosity among youth. This implies that, within family life, collective religious practices such as performing congregational prayer, attending *majelis taklim* together, or reading the Qur'an as a couple are more significant in enhancing religiosity than merely strengthening cognitive or theoretical belief (Guntoro & Hasan, 2023).

Beyond social factors, technology and digital media have transformed how individuals experience and practice religion. Millennials and Generation Z demonstrate a more flexible pattern of worship, extending beyond physical spaces through online activities such as live-streamed sermons, virtual Qur'an recitations, or sharing religious reflections on social media. The study "Gen Z's Religiosity Level: A Comparative Study between Indonesia and the United Kingdom" notes that digital-based religious literacy significantly affects the depth of spiritual experience, though not always directly correlated with the intensity of formal worship. In the household context, this means that a wife can actively strengthen the family's worship and spiritual experience by using digital tools such as religious apps, family prayer groups, or virtual discussions as a medium of guidance and spiritual reminder for her husband (Jamilah et al., 2024).

Contemporary studies also emphasize that religious knowledge (knowledge) does not automatically produce behavioral or moral transformation (consequence). Several studies in Indonesia highlight the gap between high levels of religious literacy and low consistency in worship practices and ethical behavior. This phenomenon reinforces that within family life, a wife's religious knowledge must be translated into practical moral action, not merely conceptual understanding. When religious values are embodied in moral behavior—such as

honesty, patience, and compassion—the husband is more easily inspired to enhance his own religiosity (Jamilah et al., 2024).

A similar view was expressed by Zaprukhan (2013), who argued that scientific knowledge often becomes detached from ethical and religious values. Furthermore, recent empirical findings reveal a positive correlation between religiosity and family well-being. Research in Tasikmalaya found that Muslim families with high religiosity tend to have better well-being, particularly through moderate consumption and lifestyle patterns. Thus, a wife's role in enhancing her husband's religiosity is not only measured by increased ritual activity—such as prayer or remembrance (*dhikr*)—but also by its impact on family quality, including harmonious communication, wise financial management, and socially courteous behavior. In this sense, the moral consequence dimension in Glock and Stark's framework can be expanded into a social-family consequence, representing how religiosity manifests as real blessings within family life (Muiz et al., 2025).

3.2. Discussion

The Role of the Wife in Islam

In Islamic teachings, the wife is positioned as an equal partner to the husband in building a family characterized by *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. Allah's command in Qur'an 4:1 and the Prophet's saying: "The best of you is those who are best to their families, and I am the best among you to my family." (Narrated by Muhammad), affirm that the quality of faith and character within the family deeply influences both its spiritual and social dynamics. The wife's role extends beyond emotional support to become a key contributor to her husband's spiritual and moral growth, making a pious wife a vital factor in shaping a God-conscious husband.

Equal Partnership and Spiritual Contribution

The concept of equal partnership between husband and wife in Islam originates from the principle of equality in creation and shared moral-spiritual responsibility before Allah (Qur'an 4:1). Equality here does not mean identical roles but rather complementary functions that strengthen spiritual and social resilience within the family. Findings by Siti Maesaroh & Nata Sutisna in *Journal of Theology and Humanity* highlight that households built on spiritual partnership tend to be more solid and harmonious, as both spouses are actively involved in decision-making and shared responsibilities (Maesaroh & Sutisna, 2025).

The wife's involvement in her husband's spiritual growth is evident in her support for religious activities, cultivation of religious values, and creation of a spiritual atmosphere at home. When a wife participates actively in joint worship such as congregational prayer, Qur'an recitation, and moral discussions it strengthens her husband's spiritual awareness. Such shared religious practices reinforce both emotional intimacy and faith (Shah & Aung, 2022).

In the sociocultural sphere, the wife plays an essential role as her husband's spiritual stabilizer, helping maintain emotional balance and inner peace. Her gentle communication and empathetic guidance can reinforce her husband's faith and patience amid life's trials,

making her a true source of *sakinah* spiritual tranquility as described in the Qur'an (Ehsan & Nooraldeen, n.d.)

Overall, equal partnership in Islam transcends economic or social collaboration—it embodies spiritual balance. A wife who actively nurtures *tawhid* and good character (*akhlaq*) within the home transforms the family into a center of faith formation. From this role emerges a household that strengthens faith and nurtures her husband's spirituality as the family's moral leader.

Moreover, this partnership reflects social justice and reciprocity, core principles in Islam. Husbands and wives are not competitors but collaborators within a divine framework of mutual respect and moral responsibility. Together, they uphold family harmony and moral integrity, contributing to social cohesion and ethical progress. Thus, spiritual partnership is a tangible expression of Islamic teachings that reject gender domination and affirm that true religiosity is realized through mutual spiritual cooperation.

This partnership also provides the foundation for balancing worldly and spiritual aspects within family life. When both spouses place religious values at the center of their daily activities from financial management to parenting every act becomes an act of worship. This aligns with Durkheim's functionalist theory, which views the family as a primary agent of religious socialization that transmits norms, morals, and spiritual beliefs to the next generation. Hence, a religious marital relationship not only strengthens inner life but also enhances moral and social resilience in society (Nisa & A'isyah, 2022).

Furthermore, a wife's spiritual contribution within this partnership has a transformative impact on her husband's character formation. Through her example, prayers, and gentle advice, she becomes a moral mirror that helps him grow in faith. This aligns with the classical Islamic view of women as *umm al-madrasah* the first school for the transmission of spiritual and moral values. When a wife fulfills this role with deep religious consciousness, the household becomes not merely a residence but a living spiritual space, radiating blessings for all its members.

The Wife's Educative and Exemplary Role in Family Life

The wife's educative role in Islam derives from the concept of *umm al-madrasah* (the mother as the first school of the family). This responsibility, however, extends beyond child education to include the spiritual development of the husband through example and the habituation of religious values. Maulana in *Deconstructing the Domestic Role of the Wife in Community Tradition* argue that the wife's educational influence is most effective through behavioral example rather than verbal instruction (Maulana et al., 2025).

A wife's consistency in performing worship such as prayer, Qur'an recitation, and maintaining noble conduct becomes a non-verbal form of education that shapes the home's religious atmosphere. Exemplary behavior (*al-uswah*) is the most powerful Islamic educational method in fostering religious awareness within the family. When a husband witnesses his wife's steadfastness in faith and moral integrity, he is inspired to deepen his spirituality out of self-awareness rather than obligation (Nisa & A'isyah, 2022).

Spiritual communication characterized by gentleness and affection also serves as an effective medium for imparting religious values. Empathy-based religious dialogue between spouses enhances moral responsibility, emotional intimacy, and faith consciousness. Thus,

communication founded on love and respect becomes an educative means that touches the husband's spiritual dimension (Edison & Hermanto, 2023).

Holistically, the wife's educative and exemplary role fosters a family environment oriented toward *tazkiyah an-nafs* (the purification of the soul). In Islam, this process involves continual efforts to eliminate vices and cultivate virtuous character. A wife who actively educates and guides her family morally and spiritually not only conveys values verbally but demonstrates them through daily action. With honesty, patience, and compassion, she becomes a living example of *tazkiyah* within the family.

A pious wife profoundly influences her husband's psychological and spiritual state. Her modesty, moral integrity, and sincere companionship motivate him to improve himself and strengthen his relationship with Allah. The Prophet Saw., said: "A righteous woman is the best treasure of this world." (Muslim, No. 1467). This statement affirms that a wife is not merely a companion in marriage but the moral and spiritual compass of the household.

Furthermore, exemplary behavior serves as the most effective non-verbal education method. In Islamic pedagogy, *al-uswah* is considered the most impactful learning model, as real actions are more easily internalized than verbal advice. A wife who is steadfast in worship, careful in speech, and displays noble character cultivates a peaceful religious atmosphere at home. Ultimately, this nurtures the family's faith-based character (*syakhsiiyyah imaniyyah*) (Susanti, 2022).

Thus, education through example is the cornerstone of spiritual and moral life in Muslim families. Such families produce intelligent, virtuous, and faithful generations, serving as microcosms of an Islamic society that upholds monotheism, justice, and compassion. Therefore, a wife's educative and exemplary role not only fosters spiritual tranquility within the household but also contributes significantly to the strengthening of Islamic civilization as a whole.

As for the wife's role, which theoretically can assist the husband in enhancing the quality of his religiosity, it can be described as follows:

1. The Wife's Exemplary Role in Worship and Morality

A wife's exemplary conduct in worship and virtuous behavior is a fundamental element in building a harmonious and spiritually grounded family. The study found that wives who are disciplined in performing prayers, regularly recite the Qur'an, and demonstrate gentle and respectful behavior become moral role models for their husbands and children. Such piety not only influences the husband's spiritual development but also creates a religious atmosphere within the household. In the culturally religious community of Padangsidempuan, the wife's example is often regarded as a symbol of family morality.

According to the *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, individuals acquire new behaviors through observation and imitation of others, particularly those with whom they have emotional bonds. Within the family context, the wife serves as a spiritual model, whose conduct is observed and internalized by the husband. When a wife consistently performs acts of worship, she not only fulfills her personal duty to Allah but also establishes a spiritual environment that motivates her husband to strengthen his faith (Manap, 2022).

Islam considers exemplary behavior as the most effective form of da'wah (moral propagation). The Prophet Muhammad said: "The best among you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best among you to my family" (HR. Tirmidhi)

This hadith emphasizes that good character within the family is a reflection of genuine faith. Hence, a patient, kind, and devout wife not only brings peace to her household but also becomes a preacher through her actions. A pious wife strengthens taqwa (God-consciousness) within the family. Taqwa is not merely the fear of Allah but the awareness to align life with divine guidance. This aligns with the Qur'anic verse: "Protect yourselves and your families from the Hellfire." (QS. At-Tahrim: 6)

Research by Nisa, published in *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah INTAJ*, supports these findings, noting that a wife's religiosity significantly impacts her husband's spiritual motivation. The wife's worship becomes a process of spiritual imitation, where the husband is inspired to emulate her sincerity and devotion (Nisa & A'isyah, 2022).

From a Sufi perspective, a wife's steadfastness in worship reflects the essence of *ihsan* worshipping as though one sees Allah. When worship is performed sincerely, it transforms into noble character, radiating peace and compassion within the home. Thus, the wife's exemplary behavior serves as a living embodiment of *dakwah bil hal* propagation through actions strengthening her position as a moral pillar and spiritual guide in the Muslim family.

2. Positive Religious Communication

Religious-based communication plays a crucial role in maintaining harmony and spiritual serenity within marriage. The study revealed that wives who convey religious advice with gentleness, empathy, and without a condescending tone are better received by their husbands. Such a peaceful approach fosters open, loving dialogue, allowing religious messages to be understood as acts of affection rather than criticism.

According to the theory of interpersonal communication, effective communication occurs when there is *positive regard*—the acceptance of the interlocutor without negative judgment (José & Nunda, 2025). In the Qur'an, this principle aligns with: "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction." (QS. An-Nahl: 125). Gentle speech reduces resistance and enhances emotional openness. Research by Gottschlich found that soft-spoken religious communication increases empathy and marital commitment.

In Islamic ethics, gentleness is a reflection of deep faith. The Prophet said: "Gentleness is not found in anything except that it beautifies it, and it is not removed from anything except that it makes it defective." (HR. Muslim).

Thus, positive religious communication transforms the household into a *madrasah ruhaniyyah* a spiritual school that nurtures faith and character through mutual advice, tenderness, and understanding.

3. Moral and Spiritual Support

A wife's moral and spiritual support for her husband manifests the Qur'anic principle of *ta'awun 'ala al-birr wa al-taqwa* mutual assistance in righteousness and piety (QS. Al-Ma'idah: 2). The study found that when a husband faces stress or hardship, a patient and prayerful wife provides vital spiritual strength. This support is not merely emotional

affection but an expression of faith and obedience to Allah. Psychologically, such emotional support enhances spiritual resilience, helping individuals cope with life's difficulties with gratitude and faith. (Akib et al., 2022).

A moral wife also shapes her husband's ethical conduct outside the home. Her empathy and advice help him act wisely and righteously in social interactions. Spiritually, she strengthens her husband's connection with Allah through shared worship, gentle reminders, and sincere prayers.

For example, a wife may invite her husband to pray together, read the Qur'an, or attend religious gatherings. These shared spiritual activities nurture both emotional intimacy and religious consciousness. Moreover, creating a religious home environment—such as through Qur'anic recitations and maintaining Islamic etiquette—fosters peace and strengthens faith within the family.

As Kamaluddin (2022) notes, religious environments generate positive social pressure that encourages individuals to uphold moral conduct and religious obligations. Hence, moral and spiritual support from a wife is not merely worldly affection but a form of worship (*ibadah*). It embodies the values of patience, sincerity, and faith, building a household rooted in *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*—tranquility, affection, and divine mercy.

4. CONCLUSION

This study stems from a socio-religious phenomenon among Muslim families in Padangsidempuan, focusing on the wife's role in enhancing her husband's religiosity. In a community that upholds religious values while facing modern challenges, the wife's spiritual influence becomes increasingly vital. The findings highlight that: The wife's exemplary worship and moral conduct profoundly shape her husband's religiosity; Positive religious communication nurtures spiritual awareness and emotional harmony, and Moral and spiritual support reinforces the husband's faith and emotional stability.

Together, these three elements exemplary behavior, communication, and support from the pillars of a *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, *wa rahmah* family. In Islamic thought, the wife is not merely a domestic companion but a guardian of morality and spirituality, illuminating the household with faith and compassion.

From a socio-cultural perspective, this research also demonstrates how Islamic values interact with local traditions in Padangsidempuan, which emphasize harmony, respect, and religiosity. Wives who integrate Islamic teachings with local virtues such as modesty, patience, and courtesy embody a balanced expression of faith, culture, and love. Thus, the study contributes not only to Islamic family studies but also offers a new paradigm of the Muslim woman as a spiritual agent in the social transformation of the family.

The results of this study carry several practical implications, especially for marriage counseling programs, premarital courses, and community religious initiatives in Padangsidempuan. Developing learning modules that emphasize spiritual communication, joint worship activities, and emotional support within marriage can help couples cultivate stronger and more harmonious relationships rooted in Islamic teachings. For future scholarly work, this topic could be expanded by comparing how a wife's religiosity influences her husband with how a husband's religiosity shapes his wife, or by examining

similar patterns in different cultural contexts. Such comparative research would offer deeper insight into the ways gender roles, local traditions, and religious values come together to support spiritual growth in Muslim family life.

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