

# THE CONCEPT OF A SAKINAH FAMILY FOR HUSBAND-AND-WIFE COUPLES LIVING SEPARATELY IN INOBONTO VILLAGE

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**Abstract:** A sakinah family can be formed when a husband and wife live in one house. The husband's obligation to earn a living outside the area means that the husband and wife cannot live in the same house. This study was conducted to answer research questions related to the concept of a sakinah family for married couples who live separately, and the impact of married couples who live separately on the formation of a sakinah family. This type of research is field research. Meanwhile, in terms of approach, this study uses a phenomenological approach. The research method used is a qualitative method. Data collection techniques use observation, interviews and documentation. Primary data were obtained from interviews with married couples who live separately. Secondary data were obtained from books and journal articles relevant to the research topic. The collected data were analyzed using an inductive analysis model. This study found several things to answer the research questions. First, the concept of a sakinah family for married couples who live separately is that they must maintain communication between husband and wife, maintain trust, maintain commitment, accept each other, and be honest with each other. Second, the impact of married couples who live separately on the formation of a sakinah family consists of positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is that the family economy increases. Meanwhile, the negative impact is that the husband is not intensive in raising the child, then the wife feels sad and lonely because the husband is not present at home.

**Keywords:** sakinah family; husband; wife; living separately

**Abstrak:** Keluarga sakinah dapat terbentuk apabila seorang suami dan istri tinggal dalam satu rumah. Kewajiban suami mencari nafkah di luar daerah menyebabkan suami istri tidak bisa tinggal dalam satu rumah yang sama. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian terkait konsep keluarga sakinah bagi pasangan suami istri yang tinggal terpisah, dan dampak pasangan suami istri yang tinggal terpisah terhadap pembentukan keluarga sakinah. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian lapangan. Sementara dari segi pendekatan, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan fenomenologi. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Data primer diperoleh dari hasil wawancara dengan pasangan suami istri yang tinggal terpisah. Data sekunder diperoleh dari buku dan artikel jurnal yang relevan dengan topik penelitian. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan model analisis induktif. Penelitian ini menemukan beberapa hal untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian. Pertama, konsep keluarga sakinah bagi pasangan suami istri yang tinggal terpisah adalah harus saling menjaga komunikasi antar suami istri, saling menjaga kepercayaan, saling menjaga komitmen, saling menerima satu sama lain, dan jujur satu sama lain. Kedua, dampak pasangan suami istri yang tinggal terpisah terhadap pembentukan keluarga sakinah terdiri dari dampak positif dan dampak negatif. Dampak positifnya, yaitu ekonomi keluarga meningkat. Sementara dampak negatifnya, yaitu suami tidak intens dalam pengasuhan anak, kemudian istri merasa sedih dan kesepian karena tidak adanya kehadiran suami di rumah.

**Kata kunci:** keluarga sakinah; suami; istri; tinggal terpisah

## Introduction

Marriage means to be gathered and united. According to other terms, it can also mean *ijab qabul* (marriage contract) which requires a good relationship between a pair of people spoken by words intended to continue to marriage according to the rules of marriage in Islam (Latupono, 2020; Samad, 2017; Bachrong et al., 2019; Wibisana, 2016).

The Qur'an is the main source of Islamic teachings and a guide to life for every Muslim. The Qur'an is the last holy book that Muslims follow until the end of time, believed by Muslims to be eternal, universal and true. This means that the Qur'an does not only contain instructions on the relationship between humans and God but also regulates the relationship between humans and their fellow humans (*hablum min Allah wa hablum min an-nas*), as well as humans and their surroundings (Husna, 2019; Putra et al., 2021). To understand Islamic teachings in a complete manner, it is necessary to understand the contents of the Qur'an and implement it in life and daily life seriously and consistently.

Sharmin and Azad (2018) said that among the issues related to *hablum min an-nas* discussed in the Qur'an is marriage. In the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) in Indonesia which is stated in Law Number 1 of 1974, the definition and purpose of marriage are contained in one article, namely chapter 1 article 1 which states that marriage is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a household, a happy and eternal family based on the Almighty God (Waluyo, 2020; Hudafi, 2020).

Marriage is a bond of agreement between two men and women with the conditions of *ijab kabul*, two witnesses, dowry and marriage guardian. Marriage is a religious and prophetic command that should be obeyed and emulated because there are so many wisdoms and benefits that can be taken from a marriage. Humans were created by Allah in pairs so that they can love, accept and give to each other, to obtain peace of mind in order to support devotion to Allah SWT. Carrying out marriage is carrying out religious orders and at the same time following in the footsteps and sunnah of the Messengers of Allah. Therefore, if someone has met the requirements for marriage, he is ordered to carry it out because by getting married his life will be more perfect.

One of the purposes of marriage in the view of the Qur'an is to create *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* between husband, wife and children. This is emphasized in Surah ar-Rum/30: 21: "And among His signs is this that He created for you spouses from yourselves that you may find rest in them; and He placed between your affection and mercy. Verily in that are signs for a people who give thought."

If marriage is carried out on the basis of following religious orders and following the sunnah of the Prophet, then the *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah* that Allah has created for humans can be enjoyed by a husband and wife. Related to the terms *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah*, various definitions have emerged. Among them, an expert in Islamic jurisprudence and interpretation named al-Isfahan as quoted by Nafisah interpreted the word *sakinah* as the absence of fear in facing something (Nafisah, 2019). Meanwhile, an expert in *balaghah* named al-Jurjānī as quoted by Ismatulloh (2015) interpreted the word *sakinah* as the presence of peace in the heart when something unexpected comes accompanied by a *nūr* (light) in the heart that gives peace and tranquility to those who witness it, and is a belief based on *ain al-yaqīn* (vision). There are also those who equate *sakinah* with the words *rahmah* and *thuma'nī nah*, meaning calm, not anxious in carrying out worship (Nurfitriah & Supriyanto, 2020; Garfes, 2022; Ardianto & Zamroni, 2022).

Cherlin (2020) said that a family is an institution formed by the bonds of marriage, which legally lives together as a husband and wife. They live together in life and death, carrying light together, carrying heavy together, always in harmony and peace with a determination and ideal to form a happy and prosperous family physically and mentally (Sulfianti et al., 2023). Another opinion was put forward by Indekau and Hens (2019) that the definition of a family is divided into two, namely the psychological definition of a family and the biological definition of a family. First, a family is psychologically defined as a group of people who live together in one place of residence. Each member feels an inner bond so that there is mutual influence, mutual care, and mutual surrender. Second, the biological definition of a family shows the family bond between mother, father, and child that continues because of the inseparable blood relationship.

Millah et al., (2023) said that family in a pedagogical sense is a life partnership woven by affection between a couple of two types of humans who are confirmed by marriage, which is intended to perfect each other. In this context, Nurhuda (2023) said that family is a place to learn as well as a place to sow religious values in various forms of worship. However, on the other hand, this family model does not come by itself (Saidov, 2022). Carr and Utz (2020) said that a family must be built by both partners who are life partners. Whether or not the fire of love burns, whether or not love is strong or weak, all depends on the intentions and desires of the two humans who are the pillars of the family. The time it takes to build love in each family is different. Some are slow, and maybe some can't achieve it during their lives.

Various studies say that the formation of a harmonious family must be supported by strong pillars that require struggle, sacrifice, and time (Nasir et al., 2021; Ridwan, 2015; Fatimawali et al., 2019; Sholihah & al-Faruq, 2020; Chamdi, 2020). This means that a harmonious family does not just happen. A *sakinah* family is not a "building" standing on empty land but is a subsystem of the social system according to the Qur'an (Trovio, 2021; Kholik, 2017; Tamam, 2018; Muhaini, 2021; Bhakti et al., 2020). Building a *sakinah* family is also not as easy as turning the palm of your hand, but a struggle that requires a high level of passion and awareness. However, all steps to build a *sakinah* family are something that can be attempted. Even though the conditions of a family are quite uniform, there are standard steps that can be taken to build a beautiful household in the sense of a *sakinah* family.

In addition to being something sacred, complicated, unique and enjoyable, the essence of marriage is ideally carried out with a happy heart, full of love, a set of knowledge about the rules and procedures for building a happy household, and sufficient age (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 2019; Gottman & Gottman, 2017; Walsh, 2015). A person's knowledge and understanding will lead him to have awareness and tolerance to live with his partner and free himself from various temptations. Meanwhile, sufficient age makes a person able to think and act maturely in making a decision (Aziz, 2017; Khaerani, 2019; Agustina et al., 2018; Minan, 2023; Latifa, 2015). Through this preparation, the main goal of marriage will be achieved, namely the creation of a *sakinah* family. In the general view, a *sakinah* family is a happy, peaceful,

harmonious family, with mutual understanding to understand the needs and shortcomings of their partner and does not measure the key to family happiness on abundant wealth and a stable position (Kholil et al., 2021; Basir, 2019; Dlaifurrahman, 2017).

A *sakinah* family contains family resilience. This family resilience is a tool to measure the family's achievement in carrying out its roles, functions and responsibilities in realizing the welfare of family members (Musfiroh et al., 2019). Puspita et al., as quoted by Anisah et al. (2021), defines family resilience as the family's ability to ward off or protect itself from various problems or threats to life, both from within the family itself and from outside the family such as the environment, community, society or state. Important dimensions of household resilience according to Cahyaningtyas et al., as quoted by Anisah et al. (2021), which are summarized in the text published by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and the Central Statistics Agency include family legality and integrity, physical resilience, economic resilience, social resilience, psychological resilience, and socio-cultural resilience.

Various studies have shown that in running a household, there will definitely be obstacles or problems that come one after another to married couples (Choi, 2019; Syahraeni, 2015; Aprinda et al., 2022), especially in the context of this research, namely married couples who are in a long-distance relationship.

Although the concepts and views of experts on how to build a *sakinah* family are widely available, problems in households or married couples in society still occur because each household problem has its own causal factors. For example, in the last few years, various online media and previous research results have shown that cases of infidelity occur because married couples live separately. First, Tri Hastono (judge) in Mataram was sentenced to dismissal with pension rights due to an infidelity case. This infidelity case occurred because Tri Hastono (judge) had to undergo a long-distance relationship with his wife (Firdaus, 2023). Second, the case that occurred in Tebo Regency, where the Tebo Religious Court recorded that 13 State Civil Apparatus filed for divorce from January to October 2017. The Tebo Religious Court noted that the ASN who filed for divorce were women, which numbered 13 cases

out of 20 total divorce suits. The cause of the divorce rate among ASN in Tebo Regency was domestic violence, and the most frequent was continuous disputes and quarrels due to living separately which led to divorce. This is a concern for every married couple, therefore the importance of family institutions must be emphasized and family functions must always be carried out according to what should be carried out (Fitriani et al., 2020).

The above situation also has similarities in the context of this research, where in reality there are still many families in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District who work odd jobs that are uncertain, and because of the demands of the times that continue to develop they decide to migrate out of town to earn a living. This means that these husband and wife couples live separately. The researcher's initial observation found that husband and wife couples in Inobonto Village have long-distance relationships due to reasons that require one of them to be placed in a different and far-away place, such as migrating out of town to earn a living. This situation makes several husband and wife couples in Inobonto Village have long-distance relationships in their households, making it impossible for them to meet every time. However, until now, husband and wife couples who live separately in Inobonto Village still maintain the integrity of their families.

Based on the background of the problem above, the theme related to the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately in the community in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District is important and interesting to be raised as a research theme. This study will show the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately, and contribute to the formation of a *sakinah* family.

This study aims to answer several research questions related to the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately, and the impact of married couples who live separately on the formation of a *sakinah* family. The aim is to reveal and analyze the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately, and the impact of married couples who live separately on the formation of a *sakinah* family.

## Method

This research is a type of field research. The research approach uses a phenomenological approach to reveal the various uniqueness found in an object, event, condition in the perception of individuals, groups, communities or organizations in everyday life as a whole and can be scientifically accounted for. The basis for using this approach is because there are considerations, namely: first, adjusting qualitative methods is easier when dealing with realities. Second, this approach directly presents the nature of the relationship between researchers and respondents. Third, this approach is more sensitive and more adaptable to many sharpenings of mutual influence and to the value patterns faced. The phenomenological approach actually helps research in describing the conditions that occur in the field/research location. In addition, as a scientific work, it is inseparable from conducting library research by means of books, journal articles, and other sources that are relevant to the problems raised.

Based on the types and approaches of the research above, this study uses a qualitative research method, which is a method to help researchers' study and understand various phenomena that occur in society according to their experiences (Smith & Smith, 2018; Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). In the context of this study, researchers' study and understand the phenomena that occur in society, especially Muslim families in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District. In addition, it leads researchers to understand the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately.

This study uses several data collection techniques, namely observation (Adler & Adler, 1994; Smit & Onwuegbuzie, 2018; McKechnie, 2008), interviews (Taylor, 2005; Platt, 2002), and documentation (Bowen, 2009). Primary data were obtained from interviews with married couples living separately. Secondary data were obtained from books and journal articles relevant to the research topic. The collected data were analyzed using an inductive analysis model (Thorne, 2013; Azungah, 2018; Gilgun, 2013).

The data validity technique in this study uses the triangulation technique. This is one of the data validity checks that utilizes something other than the data which is then processed to analyze the data results for checking purposes or as a comparison of the data with secondary data results (Jr et al.,



2019; Thurmond, 2001; Kalová & Lisztwan, 2006; Natow, 2020; Lauri, 2011). With the source triangulation technique, researchers use a married couple who live separately in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District as a source of data collection and as a benchmark for the validity of the data that will be processed using the triangulation technique.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **The Concept of a Sakinah Family for Husband and Wife Couples who Live Separately**

Basically, building a *sakinah* family, namely a family full of peace, tranquility, and security is the dream of every family in a marriage. However, it is not easy, especially for couples who live separately because the husband works outside the area, far from home to meet the daily economic needs of the family, especially the wife and children in order to survive. Therefore, a concept of a *sakinah* family is needed for couples who live separately so that the integrity of the family is maintained and lasting.

Based on research findings in the field, there are several things that need to be built by a family to become a *sakinah* family, especially for married couples who live apart for work reasons, namely as follows:

First, maintain communication between husband and wife. Communication between husband and wife in a family is a process of conveying information in the form of messages, ideas, and concepts related to things that are needed. For husbands and wives who live separately, communication is done via telephone. This kind of communication is different from communication carried out by husband and wife who live in the same house, where some or even all of it can be done directly without using tools such as telephones. Thus, communication between husband and wife who live separately has its own challenges such as being determined by a good cellular or internet network, and having internet costs. This situation makes communication between husband and wife require patience and mutual understanding, as well as arrangements according to the conditions and needs of the family, considering that the husband who is away from home also works to earn a living and the wife at home takes care of the children and daily household needs.

For couples who live separately, communication is important while still considering time and conditions. In essence, all informants in the field agreed that good communication between couples who live separately is very important in building a *sakinah* family.

The above findings are in line with the theory of family communication put forward by Kuntaraf and Kuntaraf (1999) that family communication is the key to happiness. However, there are values that must be upheld in communicating with family, namely avoiding always correcting one's partner, not using words that cause misunderstandings between husband and wife, evaluating each other, not interrupting each other when one of the partners is talking, respecting each other when the partner has just returned from work, and always being careful in tone of voice when communicating. These values need to be and continue to be considered by husband and wife who live separately so that the family continues to get peace, tranquility, security and peace.

Second, maintain mutual trust. Trust is very important in a family relationship, especially for couples who live apart, because trust provides confidence and concern for the partner and strength in a relationship. Van Gobel (2023) said that even though the husband and wife are in a long-distance relationship, she as a wife will never be suspicious of her partner. In line with what Estevanus (2023) stated that in a long-distance marriage, trust, honesty and loyalty are very much needed because to achieve a *sakinah* family, trust is needed.

The informant's statement above is one way to form a *sakinah* family, namely mutual trust between husband and wife, meaning that both partners, both husband and wife, need to be open or trust each other so that they can strengthen the bonds of the household.

Third, maintain commitment to each other. The commitment of a couple is not only limited to communicating but also maintaining the feelings and thoughts of the couple. Commitment makes someone bound to something or someone will be together until the end of the journey of the household. Bandu (2023) said that the commitment made to be agreed upon in marriage makes a husband and wife who live separately remain harmonious in building a *sakinah* family even though the distance separates them.

The informant's statement above is one way to form a *sakinah* family, namely maintaining mutual commitment between husband and wife, meaning that both husband and wife are needed to maintain mutual commitment. This indicates that commitment is important in building a *sakinah* family.

Fourth, accepting each other. The principle of acceptance or accepting each other is one of the principles in maintaining and fostering the integrity of a *sakinah* family, especially for married couples who live separately. Merry (2023) said that even though her husband lives outside the area to earn a living, their economic life is sometimes uncertain, and remittances from her husband are sometimes late, so without the principle of acceptance it is difficult to maintain a family, let alone become a *sakinah* family. In line with Merry (2023), Ulfianti (2023) said that as a wife, of course, she must be patient and accept her husband's situation abroad, even getting monthly remittances or not is not the main issue for her. Ulfianti (2023) also said that no matter how much her husband sends, she must be grateful, in the sense of not looking at the nominal amount of money sent by her husband, and never caring about what other people say about her husband's work and income. For Ulfianti (2023), the more important thing is to accept each other, which is much more important than the nominal amount of money. Thus, the value of a husband's responsibility is much more important in building a *sakinah* family.

Merry's statement (2023) above is not much different from Ulfianti's (2023) that the way to build a harmonious family for married couples who live apart is to accept each other. Both of them also do not make the family's economic condition a barrier to the formation of a *sakinah* family.

Fifth, be honest with each other. Married life is not free from differences of opinion and discontinuity in many things. One of the keys to a *sakinah* household, even though the husband and wife live far apart, must be open and honest about what they think and what they want to do with each other. All informants in the field agreed that honesty is an important foundation in building trust in each other. In fact, van Gobel (2023) admitted that it is difficult to understand a partner if there is no sense of trust between the two. If a husband or wife makes a mistake, do not hesitate to apologize

first. Courage in admitting mistakes will increase trust in the household, especially between husband and wife who live apart.

### **The Impact of Married Couples Living Separately on the Formation of the Sakinah Family**

Husband leaving the family in this case his wife and children at home is not good. In conditions like this, husband and wife live far apart due to the husband's migration or work outside the area, while the wife remains at home taking care of her children. This will certainly have positive and negative impacts.

One of the positive impacts of a husband and wife living separately is that the family economy improves. One of the positive impacts of a husband working outside the area leaving his wife and children is that the family's economic status is raised from being financially lacking to meet family needs to being sufficient or more in meeting life's needs, building a house, and no longer dependent on both parents. This is as stated by van Gobel (2023) that "The positive impact that the family feels when the husband leaves because he migrates or works outside the area is that the daily needs of the wife and children can be met. Alhamdulillah, the wife's livelihood and the children's needs are guaranteed, I can even save for future capital for the children's school fees". The results of this interview show that the positive impact for the wife and children when left by the husband because he works or migrates outside the area is that daily needs are met or guaranteed and they can save for the future of the children.

Apart from the positive impacts, there are several negative impacts of married couples living separately, namely as follows:

First, the husband is not intensive in childcare. Childcare should be done by both parents, both husband and wife. However, in married couples who live separately, this is slightly different, where the husband spends more time outside the area because of work, while the wife is more involved in childcare at home. This is as stated by Bandu (2023) that "Because my husband works outside the area, childcare is mostly done by me as a wife. Actually, this is not a problem for me, because my husband works outside the area also with my permission and mutual agreement. However, it cannot be denied that children also need care including affection from a father. This

is feared to hinder the psychology and growth of the child. "From this interview, childcare is rarely done by married couples who live separately specifically by a father because he works outside the area. So that, there is a change or loss of one of the parenting functions of a father in the family. This finding is in line with Adawiah's research (2017) that husbands or fathers who do not live with their families, wives and children at home will result in family disintegration, loss of childcare function and children's education in the family does not run well as well as the results of the study. However, this case does not always happen to a husband, Fatimah's research (2017) found that wives in many cases are also rarely involved in childcare because they work outside the area. In fact, Fatimah's research (2017) further stated that in several cases, parents, both husband and wife, were not involved in childcare because they both worked outside the area.

Second, the wife feels sad and lonely because her husband is not at home. This was acknowledged by all informants in the field that it cannot be denied that sometimes in certain conditions, they feel sad and lonely because their husband is not at home. The findings of this study are in line with the research of Supatmi and Masykur (2020) which found that wives feel sad and lonely because their husbands are not at home. Married couples who live separately also have negative impacts, namely in childcare and communication is not always smooth. When a married couple decides to have a long-distance marriage, in order to maintain the integrity of the household, the couple must maintain the harmony of their household, understand each other, and maintain the intensity of honest and open communication, and accept the consequences of their husband's profession with gratitude.

Basically, having a complete family is the dream of every person who is in a marriage. To get a complete family and household, it is necessary to have a way to build a family with *sakinah*, *mawadah warohmah*. Marriage is one of the actions to follow the sunnah of the Prophet. That is why people who are married must maintain their marriage well so that their household life becomes peaceful and lasting. Marriage in Islam has its own instructions in the Qur'an and hadith. These instructions are like starting from wedding preparations, getting married without dating, and also organizing household life. A *sakinah* family is interpreted as a harmonious family where the values

of Islamic teachings are always upheld and they respect and love each other. In a *sakinah* family, family members are able to carry out their obligations and always help each other. A *sakinah* family also understands each other so that if there is a conflict in the family, the conflict can be resolved well.

In relation to married couples who live separately, especially husbands who migrate to other regions to earn a living, this is very susceptible to problems in the household. The main reason why husbands migrate is to achieve success, for them the courage to migrate needs to be possessed so that they can form an independent person, ready to face a new environment, with many things to face. Migrating means leaving your hometown, relatives and family to go out of town/country with the intention of seeking profit, improving your fate or building yourself. In an effort to maintain a harmonious relationship between husband and wife who live separately, it is necessary to maintain communication between husband and wife, maintain trust, maintain commitment, accept each other, and be honest with each other.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded, namely: First, the concept of a *sakinah* family for married couples who live separately in the community in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District is that they must maintain communication between husband and wife, maintain trust, maintain commitment, accept each other, and be honest with each other. Second, the impact of married couples who live separately in the community in Inobonto Village, Bolaang District on the formation of a *sakinah* family consists of positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is that the family economy increases. While the negative impact is that the husband is not intense in raising children, then the wife feels sad and lonely because the husband is not present at home. From several findings, this study suggests several things, namely: First, in a family, a married couple are partners in life, so that the responsibility of their family is a shared responsibility. The husband's work outside the area should not be too long in the diaspora, he must often return to meet his wife and children. Second, husbands should bring their wives and children to their husband's place of work, so that the fulfillment of their family's rights and obligations can be

fulfilled properly every day. Third, it is better for husbands whose contracts have expired to return home with their wives and children to enjoy the results that their husbands have been fighting for. In providing a living, husbands can work farming, fishing or opening other businesses in areas close to their homes, if the family's needs are no longer many, because their children are adults and are able to get their own jobs and income.

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