

Digital Sakinah: Islamic Family Law Negotiation and the Resilience of Long-Distance Marriage (LDM) Couples

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Abstract

The phenomenon of Long-Distance Marriage (LDM) among civil servant couples introduces significant challenges to fulfilling key principles of Islamic Family Law, which traditionally emphasize physical presence, including financial support (*nafkah*), leadership (*qawwam*), and shared residence (*maskan*). This study addresses two central questions: how LDM couples adapt and negotiate their religious obligations, and how these processes lead to a reconceptualized form of sakinah in a modern context. Employing a qualitative approach, this research uses in-depth interviews with three LDM couples in Mempawah and analyzes the data through an interactive model. The findings reveal two adaptive patterns Delegation of Authority (Pattern A) and High Accountability (Pattern B) that transform the meaning of nafkah, qawwam, and maskan into digital practices. These adaptations culminate in the emergence of Digital Sakinah, a form of family harmony sustained through virtual communication, financial transparency, and emotional regulation, representing a contemporary expression of living law within Muslim families. Long Distance Marriage; Hukum Keluarga Islam; Qawwam Digital; Nafkah Digital; Sakinah Digital.

Keywords: Long Distance Marriage; Islamic Family Law; Digital Qawwam; Digital Nafkah; Digital Sakinah.

A. INTRODUCTION

Marriage, from the perspective of Islamic Family Law, aims to establish a family characterized by sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah (Qur'an, Ar-Rum: 21), which has traditionally been understood as a family living harmoniously, peacefully, and cohesively under one roof (*maskan*), with the full fulfillment of mutual rights and obligations (Nirwan Nazaruddin, 2020). However, the rapid pace of modernization, professional career demands, and increased labor mobility have given rise to geographically separated households, commonly referred to as Long Distance Marriages (LDM) (Ramadhan et al., 2023).

LDM has become an unavoidable reality for many Muslim couples in Indonesia, including those whose occupations or institutional assignments require them to reside in different locations. This LDM phenomenon inherently creates tension between contemporary social realities and the normative principles of Islamic Family Law. Fundamental marital obligations of the husband, such as providing financial support (*nafkah*), exercising household leadership (*qawwam*), and providing a residence (*maskan*), become subjects of adaptation and negotiation. Several studies in Indonesia have examined the dynamics of LDM from the perspective of Islamic Family Law. For instance, Falah (2022) focused on the fulfillment of spouses' rights and obligations within LDM contexts, concluding that

despite geographical separation, marital rights and responsibilities such as financial support and leadership must continue to be fulfilled through communication and commitment. (Nabilah Falah, 2022) Similarly, studies investigating efforts to achieve a *sakinah* family among LDM couples have primarily emphasized normative and sociological strategies, such as maintaining communication, openness, and trust as the main foundations of marital harmony (Ni'mah et al., 2022). Furthermore, research on family resilience among LDM couples indicates that open communication, shared vision and goals, and an attitude of *tawakkul* (reliance upon God) serve as important resources for overcoming psychological challenges and the limitations of physical togetherness (Mirzayanti et al., 2025).

Thus, existing literature suggests that analyses tend to stop at practical strategies such as communication and trust for maintaining *sakinah*, while still adhering to the traditional ideal definition of *sakinah*. To date, no study has explicitly examined how legal negotiations, particularly regarding *maskan* (residence) and household leadership, contribute to a philosophical reconceptualization of the meaning of *sakinah* itself. This case study, which involves in-depth interviews with three Muslim LDM couples employed within the same institution, offers a more complex dimension of adaptation. The three cases demonstrate different household arrangements: the first two involve dual-civil-servant couples, while the third involves a husband who is a civil servant and a wife who is a full-time homemaker. This diversity of arrangements indicates varying forms of legal negotiation concerning role distribution, financial management, and household leadership (Oktaviani, 2025a).

Through a comparison of these differing patterns, this study demonstrates that geographically separated couples are able to redefine *sakinah* not merely as a shared physical residence, but as a unity of hearts and a sense of security fostered through intensive digital connectivity. Commitment, consistent communication particularly through video calls and adaptive role-sharing, as illustrated in the case where the wife is also a civil servant, represent contemporary manifestations of Islamic marital obligations within a new social context, despite their varied forms. These findings point to the emergence of the concept of Digital *Sakinah*, a form of family harmony sustained by modern communication technology as the primary means of fulfilling emotional and spiritual needs, manifested through heterogeneous models of Long Distance Marriage.

Based on the foregoing background, this study aims to analyze two main issues: (1) how Long Distance Marriage (LDM) couples with varying household arrangements (dual-civil-servant couples and civil-servant-homemaker couples) adapt and negotiate the fundamental values of Islamic Family Law, particularly regarding financial support and household leadership; and (2) how these adaptive dynamics contribute to the creation and realization of a contextualized concept of the *Sakinah* Family, specifically in the form of Digital *Sakinah* in the modern era. The findings are expected to contribute academically to the study of contemporary Fiqh *Munakahat* and to enrich scholarly understanding of the resilience of Muslim

families amid the challenges of contemporary society.

B. METHOD

This study employed a field research design with a qualitative approach. This approach was selected to explore and interpret the dynamics of the normative adaptation of Islamic Family Law within the context of Long-Distance Marriage (LDM). The research subjects were selected purposively (purposive sampling), involving three Muslim married couples who were civil servants (PNS) and living in a Long-Distance Marriage (LDM) arrangement in Mempawah, West Kalimantan. The inclusion of multiple case variations (two PNS–PNS couples and one PNS–housewife couple) enabled a comparative analysis of patterns in negotiating rights and obligations. Primary data were collected over a one-month period, from 1 to 30 November 2025.

Primary data were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews focusing on the participants' interpretations of the concepts of *nafkah* (financial support), *qawwam* (leadership), *maskan* (residence), and efforts to realize a *sakinah* family through digital technology. Secondary data consisted of a review of Islamic Family Law literature and the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam-KHI). Data were analyzed using the Interactive Qualitative Analysis Model (Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing) with the analytical lens of the Sociology of Islamic Law to examine the living law discourse that gives rise to the concept of Digital *Sakinah*.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of a case study involving three Civil Servant (PNS) couples in Mempawah who were engaged in Long Distance Marriages (LDM). The findings indicate that these couples dynamically adapted the norms of Islamic Family Law, which are fundamentally based on physical proximity between spouses. These adaptations gave rise to two primary patterns: Pattern A: Delegation of Authority, observed in Case 1 (PNS and PNS) and Case 3 (PNS and Housewife), and Pattern B: High Accountability, identified in Case 2 (PNS and PNS). The process of negotiating roles and obligations subsequently produced what may be described as "Digital *Sakinah*," a new form of experiencing *sakinah* that has developed as a manifestation of Living Law within the community.

1. Adaptation and Negotiation of Islamic Family Law Practices

This pattern was identified among couples with longer marital duration and higher levels of trust (Cases 1 and 3), reflecting a highly efficient strategy for managing risks and costs. The transformation of *nafkah* obligations into a digitally based financial accountability system aligns closely with the principles of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, particularly *Hifz al-Mal* (the protection of wealth). In the context of LDM, the risk of misuse or inefficiency in family financial management increases due to the absence of direct supervision (Nabilah Falah, 2022). Consequently, digital systems

function as fiduciary mechanisms that safeguard family assets while simultaneously strengthening Hifz al-Nasl (the preservation of family continuity and stability):

a. Reconstruction of Financial Support Obligations: Transparency as a Source of Resilience

This pattern was identified among couples with longer marital duration and higher levels of trust (Cases 1 and 3), reflecting a highly efficient strategy for managing risks and costs. The transformation of nafkah obligations into a digitally based financial accountability system aligns closely with the principles of Maqasid al-Shari'ah, particularly Hifz al-Mal (the protection of wealth). In the context of LDM, the risk of misuse or inefficiency in family financial management increases due to the absence of direct supervision (Fazila, 2025). Consequently, digital systems function as fiduciary mechanisms that safeguard family assets while simultaneously strengthening Hifz al-Nasl (the preservation of family continuity and stability).

Differences in marital duration and the accumulation of social capital (trust) emerged as key variables influencing adaptations in financial support management, giving rise to two distinct patterns that can be analyzed through the lens of Transaction Cost Theory (Ramadhani, 2025). These patterns include:

1). Pattern A (Delegation of Authority)

This pattern was observed among couples with longer marital duration and high levels of trust (Cases 1 and 3), demonstrating a highly effective strategy for managing risks and costs. Accordingly, this relational pattern reflects a form of adaptation that develops alongside the maturity of the marital relationship. First, regarding the control mechanism, husbands delegated full authority (a Principal-Agent relationship) to their wives as the primary managers of household finances. In this context, transferring funds in large amounts became a normal and accepted practice as part of family financial management (Indania et al., 2024).

Kedua, jika dilihat melalui perspektif analisis biaya transaksi, kepercayaan yang terbentuk Second, from the perspective of Transaction Cost Theory, trust accumulated over years of marriage functions as a strategic intangible asset. As a result, monitoring costs and verification costs can be significantly reduced. Husbands do not need to scrutinize detailed expenditures because they rely on their wives' moral commitment and integrity (Splinter & Dries, 2024). In other words, trust serves as an informal mechanism that substitutes for formal control.

Third, in terms of the symbolic meaning of nafkah (financial support), economic provision is no longer understood solely in material terms. Instead, it represents emotional commitment as well as recognition of the wife's legitimate role as household manager (Meilani, 2024). Consequently, failure to provide financial support may damage the social capital embedded in the marital relationship more severely than it causes financial loss.

Overall, this pattern demonstrates that the sustainability of a marriage depends not only on economic factors but also on the quality of internal governance built upon trust. Therefore, this model can be understood as a form of family resilience oriented toward relational stability, cost efficiency, and the strengthening

of each spouse's role within the household.

2). Pattern B (High Accountability)

This pattern was identified among younger couples whose social capital was still in the process of development, as illustrated by Case 2. It reflects a more explicit and structured risk-management strategy. In other words, the early stages of marriage require more formal control mechanisms than relationships in which trust has already become firmly established.

First, regarding the control mechanism, the couple implemented close financial collaboration with a high level of digital accountability (Sulastri & Heriyanto, 2025). Accordingly, a system of checks and balances was maintained through negotiation regarding the allocation of funds, including determining the portion of income reserved for the husband while living away from home. As a result, financial decisions were made through mutual agreement, minimizing the potential for conflict.

Second, in terms of transparency, financial openness served as a primary instrument for conflict prevention. During the early stages of marriage, financial uncertainty and potential suspicion constitute significant risks. Therefore, the use of group chats or expense-tracking applications functioned as an external governance mechanism that provided both traceability and visibility of financial transactions. Consequently, couples possessed objective data that could be used to address differing perceptions regarding the use of money. (Mulyani et al., 2024)

Third, from a risk-analysis perspective, Pattern B can be understood as a proactive family resilience strategy. Strict digital accountability functions as a structural substitute for social capital that has not yet fully matured. Through the documentation of every transaction, couples are able to mitigate the risks of moral hazard and suspicion, thereby preventing future increases in transaction costs, including psychological conflict and even the risk of divorce (Sulkiah. Selamat Jalaludin, 2022). Thus, digital transparency serves not only as an administrative tool but also as a foundation for building long-term trust.

Overall, this pattern demonstrates that younger couples establish household stability through a more formal, measurable, and digitalized approach to financial management. In other words, this strict control structure acts as a bridge toward the development of stronger trust as experience and relational maturity increase over time.

b. Digital Qawwam: The Shift of Authority toward an Affective Function

The role of qawwam (husband's leadership) in the context of Long-Distance Marriage (LDM) has undergone a significant transformation. Whereas a husband's authority was traditionally understood within a physical and directive framework, as emphasized in much of the classical fiqh literature, it has now shifted toward a functional and consultative form of leadership, referred to here as Digital Qawwam (Luthfi et al., 2024). Accordingly, a husband's leadership no longer operates through direct control but through active participation in decision-making processes and the provision of emotional support.

In general, all LDM couples in this study adopted a *mubadalah* (reciprocal) relational model, in which strategic household decisions were reached through open discussion (*musyawarah*). This was made possible by comparable educational backgrounds and a shared awareness of their professional responsibilities as civil servants (Nursida et al., 2025). Consequently, the authority of the *qawwam* is no longer measured by the capacity for physical control but rather by consultative competence and effective emotional management.

Nevertheless, a more complex dynamic emerged in Pattern B (Case 2), which exhibited a higher degree of symbolic obedience. In this case, the wife consistently engaged in rituals of digital obedience by seeking her husband's permission for various activities, including relatively minor matters (Falah, n.d.). However, this phenomenon should not be interpreted as a form of complete subordination. Rather, it represents a sociological compromise aimed at preserving the symbolic role of the traditional *qawwam* within a context of professional equality that has the potential to blur conventional gender-role boundaries (Nasution et al., 2025). In other words, this practice serves as a symbolic reaffirmation of traditional relational structures within a modern social setting.

Furthermore, the functional nature of Digital *Qawwam* became particularly evident in conflict resolution processes, where husbands acted as affective mediators. In Cases 1 and 3, husbands emphasized patience, attentive listening, and the provision of emotional space for their spouses. In contrast, in Case 2, the husband's leadership was reflected in his ability to regulate communication during conflict, such as by employing a strategy of remaining silent temporarily to calm emotions and then revisiting the discussion later in the afternoon or evening when both parties were able to think more clearly (Oktaviani, 2025b). Consequently, leadership within the LDM context has evolved into a functional model that prioritizes emotional regulation as an affective function designed to prevent prolonged conflict, which constitutes one of the greatest threats to the stability of long-distance marriages (Ni'mah et al., 2022).

Overall, the concept of Digital *Qawwam* demonstrates that a husband's leadership in LDM is no longer centered on physical authority but on emotional, consultative, and managerial capacities that sustain the continuity of marital relationships despite geographical separation. This transformation reflects the adaptive response of modern families to changing social and professional configurations.

c. Virtual *Maskan* and the Application of *Sadd al-Dharī'ah*

The concept of *maskan*, which encompasses residence, tranquility, and the fulfillment of emotional needs, undergoes a profound functional substitution as a result of physical separation in LDM arrangements. The fundamental function of *maskan* as a source of *sakinah* (tranquility) and protection has been transformed into a condition of psychological security, referred to in this study as Virtual *Maskan*, which is maintained through consistent emotional presence mediated by communication technology (Sumadi & Wardani, 2024). As a result, the domestic

space, once understood primarily as a physical environment, has evolved into an affective space sustained through continuous attention and communication.

From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, couples reinterpret the meaning of maskan from a physical entity into a symbol of emotional presence. The quality of digital interactions, such as the consistency of video calls and the intensity of daily conversations, functions as symbolic rituals that compensate for the absence of physical presence and replicate the protective dimensions normatively associated with the concept of maskan (Ilham Kurniawan et al., 2023). Consequently, harmony within long-distance marriages operates at a symbolic level that no longer depends upon geographical proximity.

Moreover, this adaptive strategy is not merely a psychological effort but also a practical jurisprudential response. The practice of Virtual Maskan can be understood as an implementation of the legal principle of *Sadd al-Dharī'ah* (the prevention of harm) (Apriliani, 2022). Long Distance Marriage has the potential to generate significant *mafsadah* (harm), particularly concerning moral and sexual integrity, which are closely related to *hifz al-din* (the preservation of religion) and *hifz al-nasl* (the preservation of lineage). Therefore, maintaining strong emotional and spiritual bonds through Virtual Maskan serves as a preventive mechanism that minimizes such risks (Ni'mah et al., 2022). Consistent emotional presence thus becomes a form of functional legal obligation, reflecting the understanding that the preservation of the objectives of Islamic law (*Maqasid al-Shari'ah*) should take precedence over a literal interpretation of the requirement for physical cohabitation (Sunarto, 2025).

In addition, spiritual resources such as *tawakkal* (reliance upon God), prayer, and family support play a central role in strengthening the resilience of Muslim families within the context of LDM (Mirzayanti et al., 2025). *Tawakkal* provides a cognitive framework through which couples can accept and manage the uncertainties associated with geographical separation, allowing the challenges of LDM to be understood as part of a test of faith related to *hifz al-din* (Astuti & Bashori, 2025). Consequently, this spiritual dimension functions as a primary coping mechanism that supports emotional stability (*hifz al-nafs*) and helps couples maintain psychological balance amid the pressures of physical separation.

2. The Construction of Digital Sakinah: A Manifestation of Living Law

Digital Sakinah functions not merely as a descriptive term but as a multidimensional theoretical framework that reformulates the concept of Sakinah, *Mawaddah, wa Rahmah* within the context of social transformation driven by the disruption of space and time (Kalamiah et al., 2025). This concept explains how families engaged in Long Distance Marriage (LDM) systematically adapt to changes in the structure of interpersonal interaction, such that the meanings of tranquility, intimacy, and presence are no longer dependent upon physical proximity but rather upon the quality of stable, institutionalized, and spiritually grounded digital communication.

At the epistemological level, Digital Sakinah reflects a process of functional substitution for the classical functions of family life, namely *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. Physical co-presence, traditionally regarded as a primary prerequisite for marital harmony, has gradually shifted toward affective online presence mediated through synchronous and asynchronous communication technologies. In this context, emotional bonding has proven to be more influential than the frequency of face-to-face encounters; consistent and meaningful online interaction is capable of fulfilling the psychological function of *maskan* as a source of tranquility and emotional security (Ramadhan et al., 2024). Consequently, Digital Sakinah signifies the emergence of a new paradigm in which the sacredness of the marital relationship can be maintained despite geographical separation.

Furthermore, Digital Sakinah affirms that standardized online communication practices, such as routine video calls, conflict management through digital platforms, and the integration of religious values into virtual interactions, have become forms of institutionalized emotional practices that sustain the stability of LDM households. This demonstrates that the digitalization of interaction is not merely a technological adaptation but part of a broader restructuring of intimate relationships oriented toward strengthening family resilience (Lubis, 2021).

From a socio-normative perspective, Digital Sakinah may be understood as one of the most contemporary manifestations of Living Law, namely social and moral norms that develop organically in response to evolving societal needs. Within the Living Law framework, LDM couples do not wait for formal legislation to redefine household obligations. Instead, through legal consciousness, they develop their own mechanisms that remain compatible with the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*). Emotional relationships maintained through digital interaction are viewed as efforts to preserve *hifz al-din* (the preservation of religion), *hifz al-nafs* (the preservation of life and well-being), and *hifz al-nasl* (the preservation of family continuity and lineage). Therefore, Digital Sakinah operates not only as a relational innovation but also as a normative practice that possesses both social and spiritual legitimacy (Chumayro et al., 2024).

In conclusion, Digital Sakinah is a theoretical construct that emphasizes that family harmony in the modern era should no longer be measured solely by physical proximity but by the ability of spouses to manage separation through sustained, stable, and value-based emotional connectivity. This framework provides a strong conceptual foundation for the analysis of Long Distance Marriage families while also contributing to the development of Muslim family theories in the digital age.

To further clarify the significance of this conceptual framework, the following section discusses its socio-legal implications, illustrating how changes in patterns of digital interaction influence the normative structure of Muslim households.

a. The Validity of Al-'Adah Muhakkamah

The first fundamental implication of the theoretical construction of Digital Sakinah is the reinforcement of the validity of the *fiqh maxim al-'Adah Muhakkamah* (custom is recognized as law) within the context of contemporary Islamic

jurisprudence (fiqh muamalah)(Subli, 2025). This principle of Usul al-Fiqh provides normative legitimacy for adaptive practices in Long Distance Marriage (LDM). Repeated and consistent behaviors within LDM arrangements, such as scheduled video calls before bedtime or the use of shared financial-tracking applications, have undergone institutionalization, evolving from individual habits into a form of Digital 'Urf (Hartini & Setiawan, 2023). This mutually agreed Digital 'Urf subsequently functions as a new implicit social contract that binds both spouses and sustains relational stability despite physical separation.

Historically, the fulfillment of marital rights and obligations, particularly *nafkah* (financial support) and *mu'asyarah bi al-ma'ruf* (good and proper companionship), has been interpreted in a literal sense through physical co-residence and geographical proximity (Hilmi, 2023). Within the framework of Digital Sakinah, however, a process of functional substitution occurs, whereby the criteria for fulfilling these obligations shift significantly toward the quality of stable digital interaction and online accountability. Consequently, failure to comply with agreed digital routines and communication patterns may be interpreted as a violation of *mu'asyarah bi al-ma'ruf* within the context of Digital 'Urf (Hidayat et al., 2023). This shift demonstrates that customary legal norms ('urf) have become functionally embedded within technological practices, reflecting the adaptive response of Living Law to contemporary spatial and temporal realities.

b. The Transcendence of Fiqh Values

Traditionally, the concept of *sakinah* (tranquility and inner peace) has been closely associated with physical presence and shared living space, particularly in classical interpretations of Qur'an 30:21. In the digital context, however, *sakinah* undergoes a significant transformation, shifting its emphasis from a spatial dimension to a functional and instrumental one. For LDM couples, tranquility is achieved through predictability and virtual emotional availability. This availability is measured by the consistency of communication and the reliability of emotional responsiveness rather than by sharing the same physical residence. Within the framework of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, technology functions as a crucial *wasilah* (means) for achieving legal objectives, particularly *hifz al-nafs* (the preservation of well-being and emotional stability) and *hifz al-nasl* (the preservation of family continuity), in accordance with the principle *al-wasa'il laha hukm al-maqasid* (means assume the legal status of their objectives) (Milhan, 2021).

Similarly, *mawaddah* (deep love and affection) and *rahmah* (compassion and self-sacrifice) are reinterpreted not merely as passive emotions but as active commitments expressed through investments of time and energy in digital spaces. Preserving *mawaddah* and *rahmah* in LDM requires conscious effort, which may be likened to *jihad al-nafs* (the struggle of the self) in overcoming physical distance, time-zone differences, and digital distractions. Such investments include allocating dedicated time for meaningful communication, thereby affirming the priority of the marital relationship despite professional obligations. *Rahmah* is manifested through forms of digital sacrifice, such as learning new technologies for a spouse's

convenience or adjusting personal preferences to accommodate communication schedules. These practices represent forms of active devotion rooted in the principle of *ihsan* (striving for excellence) (Batubara, 2024).

The adaptations undertaken by LDM couples, particularly civil servants whose work assignments require geographical separation, may therefore be understood as a process of re-internalization of *Shari'ah*. Such adaptations are valid and should not be viewed as deviations because they are grounded in higher legal principles. The central principle underlying these adaptations is that the spiritual and emotional substance of the law is more important than its physical form (*al-'ibrah bi al-jawhar la bi al-surah*). As long as the primary objectives of marriage, namely the preservation of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, are effectively achieved through digital means, such practices remain consistent with the spirit of Islamic law (Ibarah et al., 2025).

These practices may also be interpreted as an application of *tahqiq al-manat* (determining the relevance of legal rulings to specific circumstances), whereby the principles of *munakahat* are applied to a new form of *'urf*, namely digital communication within LDM relationships. As long as this emerging *'urf* does not contradict clear textual evidence (*nass*), it may legitimately be considered in legal reasoning and adjudication (Ali Ahmad Syaifuddin, 2024).

Therefore, the adaptations adopted by LDM civil servant couples should not be understood as deviations from Islamic family law but rather as a form of legal re-internalization that responds appropriately to their contemporary social realities.

c. Contextualized Obedience

Cases involving Long Distance Marriage (LDM), particularly among professionals such as civil servants, migrant workers, and mobile professionals, demonstrate that family-law practices may emerge as forms of highly contextual and negotiated obedience. In such situations, obedience is neither static nor applied literally. Instead, it takes the form of dynamic compliance that is continually adjusted to the realities of everyday life, including professional responsibilities, economic obligations, religious commitments, and family duties.

LDM couples frequently face a structural dilemma. On one side are the demands of modern life, including career development, mobility, professionalism, and economic responsibility. On the other side are traditional normative expectations concerning marital roles, family responsibilities, and religious obligations. As a result, household roles become products of ongoing negotiation rather than fixed assignments determined solely by gender or tradition (Hapsari, 2021).

From the perspectives of role-negotiation theory and structure-agency theory, couples utilize both formal and informal spaces for dialogue in order to distribute responsibilities flexibly. Within this framework, obligations such as the husband's duty to provide financial support and the wife's role in household management are not treated as rigid and literal norms. Instead, they become outcomes of mutual agreement shaped by employment conditions, geographical circumstances, and the practical realities of daily life (Laili Nur Faridatus Sholihah, Abdul Muhaimin Zen,

2024).

This process of role negotiation enables the emergence of new adaptive patterns, including shared financial responsibilities, collaborative management of distance and communication, and collective household decision-making. These arrangements continue to respect religious values and social norms while remaining realistic in relation to contemporary conditions. The success of such adaptive models demonstrates that family-law norms and religious norms are not necessarily static. Rather, they are capable of transformation in response to changing needs, providing evidence that Living Law has normatively legitimized these diverse forms of obedience (Multazam, 2022).

From this perspective, obedience is not merely the formal execution of household obligations. Instead, it constitutes an ethical process that balances individual rights, such as the right to employment, self-development, and economic participation, with communal responsibilities involving family life, marital duties, and moral-religious commitments. Couples who successfully negotiate and adapt to these circumstances demonstrate that obedience may be reinterpreted as an ethical equilibrium rather than absolute subordination or mechanical compliance (Rosida, 2022).

This construction of obedience does not weaken religious values or traditional social norms. On the contrary, it represents the realization of those values within contemporary circumstances, transforming family-law norms into living, flexible, and socially relevant principles capable of responding to the challenges of modern society. Overall, Digital Sakinah is not merely a sociological strategy for sustaining family life but also a form of legal adaptation grounded in religious values and strengthened through digital technology. Consequently, this construct illustrates how LDM families are able to reconcile the demands of modernity with the principles of Islamic law, thereby creating a new yet authentic model of family resilience.

D. CONCLUSION

This study found that couples engaged in Long Distance Marriage (LDM) among civil servants (PNS) are able to renegotiate the obligations of *nafkah* (financial support), leadership (*qawwam*), and the meaning of *maskan*, resulting in the emergence of the concept of Digital Sakinah. Digital Sakinah refers to a form of family tranquility that is sustained through online communication, financial transparency, and emotional as well as spiritual commitment. These findings demonstrate that the norms of Islamic Family Law are elastic in nature and can function as a form of Living Law within contemporary social contexts.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the development of contemporary *fiqh munakahat* and the Sociology of Islamic Law by proposing a new conceptual model of *sakinah* that is not dependent upon physical presence but rather upon the relational functions that are realized through digital technology. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its small number of cases and relatively homogeneous context, namely civil servant couples within a single geographical

area. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings remains limited. Future research is therefore encouraged to include a wider range of professions, cultural backgrounds, and regional settings, as well as to develop measurement models for family resilience based on digital interaction.

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