

RETHINKING URBAN FAMILY RESILIENCE THROUGH MAQĀSĪD AL-SHARĪ'AH: WOMEN'S ROLE TRANSFORMATION IN GORONTALO

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Received: 19/11/2025	Revised: 08/05/2026	Approved: 26/05/2026
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[DOI: 10.32332/akademika.v31i1.11936](https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v31i1.11936)



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Abstract

This study aims to examine how Hulondhalo women, particularly those actively involved in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organizations in Gorontalo, interpret and perform their roles in maintaining family resilience amid the dynamics of urban society; how the synergy between Islamic moderation (*wasatiyyah*), local customs, and the principles of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* shapes family resilience practices; and how NU women negotiate domestic and public roles within the context of social and digital transformation. This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design conducted in the urban area of Gorontalo, involving key informants consisting of NU women members in Gorontalo City, traditional leaders, and religious leaders selected purposively. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, and were subsequently analyzed using the interactive analysis technique of Miles and Huberman through the analytical lenses of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, local customs, and the principles of *wasatiyyah*. The findings reveal three major points. First, there is a reinterpretation of the family breadwinner role in which women contribute economically without diminishing the values of family harmony. Second, the strengthening of domestic deliberation (*musyawarah*) functions as a decision-making mechanism grounded in moderation values. Third, there is an integration between Gorontalo customs and the principles of *Maqāṣid* in constructing adaptive family norms, including the utilization of digital platforms to reinforce educational and economic family functions. The study also finds that NU women position themselves as guardians of Islamic and cultural values based on the principle of *adati hula-hula'a to syar a', syara' hula-hula'a to Kitabullah*, thereby balancing the demands of modernity with religious values. The originality of this study lies in the formulation of a synthesis framework of *adat-Maqāṣid-wasatiyyah* as a conceptual model of urban family resilience that is not merely normative, but also contextual and

applicable in responding to social, cultural, and digital transformations within urban communities.

Keywords: Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah; Urban Family Resilience; Women's Role Transformation; Gorontalo; Muslim Women

A. Introduction

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, is widely recognized for its moderate, adaptive, and accommodative character toward local cultural values. Within its epistemological framework, NU does not merely perceive Islam as a normative system, but also as an ethical force that lives and interacts dynamically with the social realities of society (Suhendra, et al., 2025). In Gorontalo, this interaction is manifested in the customary philosophy "*Adati hula-hula'a to Syara', Syara' hula-hula'a to Kitabullah*," which affirms that custom is rooted in Islamic law, and Islamic law is rooted in the Qur'an. This philosophy shapes a socio-religious structure that does not separate religion from culture, including in the construction of gender roles within the family (Oktora et al., 2021).

In the context of the transformation of urban society in Gorontalo over the last decade, family structures have undergone significant changes due to urbanization, digitalization, and economic pressures. Urban families no longer rely entirely on traditional role divisions but are gradually shifting toward a more flexible functional family model ((Benson, 1987). Previous studies have shown that the Gorontalo customary system continues to play an important role in maintaining family harmony. Family deliberation (*musyawarah*) between husbands and wives in household decision-making reflects that women hold a participatory position within the family structure (Yasin et al., 2023).

These values are aligned with the principles upheld by Nahdlatul Ulama, such as *musyawarah* (deliberation), *iṣlāḥ* (reconciliation), and *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), which reinforce a family relationship model based on mutual partnership. Thus, *adat* and Islam do not operate separately; rather, they mutually strengthen one another in fostering family resilience (Hiptraspa & Saputri, 2024). Nevertheless, modernization has also introduced new challenges to the sustainability of traditional values. Studies have found that some urban families have begun to abandon customary practices such as pre-marital deliberation rituals, women's and family participation in routine religious gatherings (*pengajian*), as well as the increasing expectation for women to become economic breadwinners, due to perceptions of time inefficiency. Jieun Yoo demonstrates that women tend to experience higher levels of family-to-work conflict, while men are more dominant in work-to-family conflict and issues related to marital satisfaction, thereby necessitating a reinterpretation of gender roles within the family (Yoo, 2022)

Other studies published in the same journal further emphasize that women hold a strategic role in maintaining household stability through the internalization of moderate Islamic values (Arsyad et al., 2025). Based on these findings, the transformation of the gender roles of NU women in Gorontalo is not merely social in nature, but also carries theological and normative dimensions. This transformation can be interpreted as a practical implementation of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, in which family resilience is measured not only through economic aspects, but also through moral, spiritual, and cultural stability.

Research on Muslim women, family resilience, and moderate Islam has grown rapidly over the last five years. However, most studies remain fragmented, focusing only on specific aspects such as women's economic participation or domestic roles within the family. These studies have not yet comprehensively connected gender dynamics with Islamic normative frameworks such as *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (Munir & Aboidullah, 2018). Meanwhile, studies on *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* tend to remain normative-philosophical in nature and are rarely operationalized within contemporary social analysis (Kasdi, 2014). Many studies still position *Maqāṣid* as a classical Islamic legal theory rather than as an analytical framework for understanding social transformation, particularly in issues of gender and modern family resilience. Research on Nahdlatul Ulama and local wisdom in Indonesia also demonstrates the dominance of cultural-descriptive approaches. These studies largely discuss the relationship between Islam and adat, yet they have not deeply examined how NU women function as agents of value transformation within urban families affected by modernization and digitalization (Al-Muthahhiri et al., 2023)

Furthermore, studies concerning Gorontalo have predominantly emphasized the relationship between adat and Islam through the philosophy "*Adati hula-hula'a to Syara'*," but have not specifically explored the transformation of NU women's gender roles within the context of modern urban life. In fact, social changes driven by urbanization have significantly altered the structure of family relations. A study by Nur Ainun Nisya Mohi demonstrates that the practice of *modutu* in Gorontalo still preserves spaces for family deliberation between husbands and wives (Mohi et al., 2024). However, this study did not connect such practices to gender transformation grounded in *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

Therefore, a clear research gap exists, namely the absence of an integrated analysis linking *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, gender transformation, and urban family resilience, particularly among NU women in Gorontalo City. Existing studies still tend to be partial, separating the dimensions of religion, culture, and gender. Based on this gap, the present study identifies how NU women actualize the values of *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, *ḥifẓ al-māl*, and *ḥifẓ al-nasl* within urban family life. This approach bridges the normative dimensions of Islam with modern social realities (Krismiyarsi & Adityo, 2025).

Accordingly, this study offers conceptual, theoretical, and empirical contributions. Conceptually, it connects *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* with gender transformation; theoretically, it expands the discourse on Islamic-based family resilience; and empirically, it presents the context of NU women in Gorontalo as key actors in fostering urban family resilience that is moderate, adaptive, and rooted in local-religious values. This study is therefore important for analyzing how NU women in Gorontalo construct their gender roles within an urban context, as well as how the interaction between Islamic values, *adat*, and modernity shapes a more adaptive and sustainable model of family resilience (Umumah et al., 2025)

B. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with an interpretative phenomenological design aimed at deeply understanding the experiences of NU women in transforming gender roles and their contribution to urban family resilience in Gorontalo. This approach is selected because it is capable of uncovering the subjective meanings of informants' lived experiences within complex social, cultural, and religious contexts. Theoretically, this research integrates the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*

perspective as a normative-ethical framework with gender transformation theory and family resilience theory, so that the analysis is not only social in nature but also possesses theological and moral depth (Disemadi, 2022). This integrative perspective allows the study to examine family resilience not only as a social phenomenon but also as a value-based religious practice.

The research site is located in urban areas of Gorontalo and its surroundings, which have active communities of NU women, particularly those affiliated with Muslimat NU and the intellectual and social network of Lakpesdam NU in Gorontalo. This location is selected based on the consideration that urban Gorontalo represents a social space experiencing accelerated change due to urbanization, digitalization, and economic pressure, while simultaneously maintaining local customary values and Islamic principles (Azwar & Rinaldi, 2024). This socio-cultural setting provides a relevant context for exploring how NU women negotiate religious values and modern urban demands in everyday family life.

The research informants are women, specifically NU women residing in Gorontalo, aged between 30 and 45 years, who are involved in NU community activities both structurally and culturally. The total number of informants is 10, consisting of three NU women members of Muslimat NU, one administrator of Lakpesdam NU, four husbands from NU urban families, and two NU religious leaders in Gorontalo. These NU women actively participate in social-religious activities within NU structures and cultural networks (Adiyanta, 2019). Their active involvement enables the research to capture perspectives grounded in both religious commitment and practical social experience.

The number of informants was determined based on the principle of data saturation, where information is considered sufficient when no new variations of meaning emerge from additional interviews. The NU women informants are wives in urban families with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from traders, teachers, private employees, to housewives actively engaged in social-religious activities (Choi & Schwarcz, 2025). The diversity of socio-economic backgrounds also enriches the analysis of how family resilience is constructed across different urban life situations.

The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows: (1) women who were wives in NU families living in urban Gorontalo; (2) active involvement in Muslimat NU or Lakpesdam NU activities; (3) residence in urban areas for at least five years; and (4) participation in economic or social activities beyond domestic responsibilities. Informants were also required to provide voluntary informed consent prior to participation. The exclusion criteria included women who were not affiliated with NU organizational or cultural networks, did not reside in urban areas, or declined participation and documentation procedures (Nuruddin et al., 2025). These criteria were designed to ensure that the selected participants possessed sufficient experience and relevance to the focus of the study.

The recruitment process was conducted in four stages. First, the researchers identified Muslimat NU communities and Lakpesdam NU networks in Gorontalo as the main entry points. The researcher then established communication with organizational leaders as gatekeepers to gain initial access to potential informants who met the criteria. Subsequently, snowball sampling was used, where initial informants recommended other relevant participants. After identification, each informant was provided with an explanation of the research objectives and asked for voluntary informed consent (Rianto, 2004). This procedure ensured that participation was voluntary and ethically accountable throughout the research process.

The demographic profile of informants shows an age range between 25 and 40 years with educational backgrounds ranging from junior high school to master's degrees. Most informants are wives in nuclear families with marriage durations between 5 and 25 years. In terms of occupation, informants include traders, teachers, private employees, civil servants, and housewives who are also active in informal economic activities. Their involvement in Muslimat NU and Lakpesdam NU indicates that they play roles not only in the domestic sphere but also in broader socio-intellectual Islamic spaces (Kaelan, 2005). This demonstrates that NU women in urban Gorontalo occupy multidimensional roles that extend beyond traditional domestic expectations.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, documentation of organizational activities, and reflective field notes. Interviews were conducted flexibly either at the informants' homes or in Muslimat NU and Lakpesdam NU community spaces. Observations were conducted during religious activities, community discussions, and family decision-making processes. Triangulation techniques were used to ensure data validity by comparing interview results, observations, and documentation (Kariuki et al., 2022). The triangulation process strengthened the credibility and consistency of the findings across different sources of evidence.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques through stages of data reduction, open coding, thematic categorization, and interpretation based on *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*. All data were then analyzed inductively to identify patterns of gender role transformation among NU women in the urban family context. The interpretation of findings is not only descriptive but also reflective by connecting empirical findings to the dimensions of *hifz al-din*, *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-mal*, and *hifz al-nasl* as part of the objectives of Islamic law (Said et al., 2025). Through this framework, the findings were interpreted not only in terms of social adaptation but also in relation to Islamic ethical principles of family wellbeing.

This study also applies the principle of researcher reflexivity as an important component of methodological integrity. The researcher is a Gorontalo woman, married, and has socio-religious closeness to the NU environment. This position provides epistemic advantages as it allows for a deeper understanding of the cultural context and lived experiences of NU women. However, this position also carries the potential for subjective bias. Therefore, the researcher applies bracketing strategies by recording personal reflections in field notes and conducting data validation through source triangulation to maintain interpretative objectivity (Dörfler & Stierand, 2021). As a result, the study sought to balance contextual closeness with critical analytical distance throughout the research process

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

From Domestic Guardianship to Strategic Agency: The Transformation of Women's Gender Roles in Urban Family Resilience in Gorontalo

The findings of this study indicate that NU women in urban families in Gorontalo can no longer be understood solely through a traditional domestic framework. Instead, they have evolved into strategic actors in the family economy, public social spaces, and the reproduction of religious values within urban family life. However, this transformation is not entirely linear or harmonious; rather, it is characterized by continuous negotiation and tension, as it remains situated within the

interplay between classical Islamic family ideals and rapidly changing urban social realities. These findings suggest that gender transformation among NU women reflects an adaptive process shaped simultaneously by religion, culture, and urban modernity.

In the context of the family economy, NU women are no longer positioned merely as supplementary earners but, in many cases, have become primary economic actors within their households. Interview findings reveal that most informants interpret family income as a collective responsibility grounded in the Islamic principle of *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance). One informant, Informant A (42 years old), a Muslimat NU member who runs a home-based food business in Kota Tengah Subdistrict, explained that her involvement in the family economy emerged as a response to increasing living costs and educational expenses for her children. She stated:

“Nowadays, relying only on the husband is sometimes difficult, especially since all the children are in school. So, I also sell food to keep the family running. But I do not feel like I am taking over the husband’s role; rather, we support each other so that the household remains strong.” (Mrs. A, 2025).

This statement demonstrates that the concept of *nafaqah* within NU urban families has undergone an expansion of meaning. It is no longer narrowly understood as the sole obligation of men, but as a shared responsibility aimed at achieving family *maṣlahah*. Nevertheless, informants continue to symbolically acknowledge the husband’s position as head of the household. Thus, the transformation of women’s economic roles occurs through negotiation rather than the elimination of the Islamic family structure. A similar view was expressed by informant B (38 years old), a madrasah teacher and online entrepreneur in Sipatana Subdistrict. She explained that her economic activities are performed as a form of worship and family devotion, reflecting the Islamic principle of *ta'āwun*:

“I work not to replace my husband, but to help my family. In Islam, we are taught to help one another. If a wife has the ability to support the family economy, why not? The important thing is to maintain the family and children.” (B, 2025).

This finding demonstrates that women’s participation in the urban economy is framed within Islamic ethical values rather than individualistic economic competition. At the same time, these practices subtly challenge classical jurisprudential constructions that position men as the sole *qawwam* (family provider and authority figure). The findings therefore indicate a practical reconfiguration of *qawwamah* in everyday family relations, although the symbolic authority of husbands continues to be preserved within formal religious discourse (Azisa et al., 2025).

Interestingly, the findings also reveal an epistemic tension between normative texts and social practice. Some informants continue to affirm the husband as the family leader, while simultaneously household economic decisions are often made jointly (Busriyanti et al., 2025). This indicates that *qawwamah* is not entirely abandoned but functionally renegotiated through deliberative family practices based on consultation (*shūrā*). Such negotiation reflects the emergence of more participatory gender relations within urban Muslim households.

In the spiritual dimension, NU women play a role in strengthening the emotional and moral stability of the family through religious activities such as *majlis taklim* and *halaqah*. However, these religious practices are not solely spiritual expressions; they also function as coping mechanisms in response to economic

pressure and the psychological burdens of urbanization. Thus, religiosity operates not only as an expression of faith but also as a social survival strategy (Barsihannor dkk., 2025). This finding demonstrates that religious engagement among NU women contributes significantly to sustaining emotional stability and family cohesion amid urban social change.

At the same time, a paradox emerges: the greater the involvement of women in public and economic spheres, the heavier their domestic and mental workload becomes. This phenomenon suggests that gender transformation does not always produce equal relations but may instead generate a more complex form of double burden that is not always structurally visible (Kurniawan & Ezzerouali, 2024)

Within the local Gorontalo cultural context, customary values such as *momayango*, *malembungo*, and *pohutu* remain key references in shaping women's identity. However, the findings show that these values are no longer interpreted traditionally, but rather reinterpreted as forms of Islamic social ethics compatible with modernity. In other words, local custom does not disappear but undergoes a process of re-Islamization in everyday practice. As expressed by one informant:

"Today, Gorontalo women still maintain politeness and respect for the family, but that does not mean they cannot pursue higher education or work. We are taught that preserving family dignity is also part of worship." (Mrs. C, 2025).

This statement indicates that local customs are being reinterpreted within a more contextual Islamic ethical framework aligned with modern life. On the other hand, the role of Lakpesdam NU women in Islamic economic education and family literacy reflects an institutionalization of *maqāṣid al-syari'ah* within household life. As stated by one Lakpesdam NU :

"We teach family financial management based on halal and blessed principles, such as saving and investing for Hajj and children's education through Islamic financial institutions."

This shows that Lakpesdam NU women not only strengthen the family economy but also internalize Islamic values within urban family life. However, the effectiveness of this program remains limited as it only reaches certain groups, meaning value transformation is not yet evenly distributed within the urban NU community (Mrs. D, 2025).

Another important finding is the emergence of a deliberative Islamic family model, in which family decisions are no longer strictly hierarchical but are based on spousal discussion. This is evident in decisions related to children's education and Hajj savings:

"We always discuss first before deciding on children's schooling or saving for Hajj, because family decisions must be made together for a better future." (Mrs. C, 2025)

This indicates that husband-wife relations in urban families are not solely based on unilateral authority but through deliberative mechanisms reflecting the Islamic value of *shūrā*, while simultaneously strengthening family economic and spiritual resilience. Nevertheless, masculine symbolic authority structures are still

normatively maintained as a form of social and religious legitimacy, resulting in a duality between egalitarian practice and patriarchal symbolism (Ahyu et al., 2024)

From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*, the findings indicate an expanded meaning of *ḥifẓ al-māl* and *ḥifẓ al-nasl*, which no longer refers only to traditional economic and genealogical protection, but also includes psychosocial resilience and digital adaptation of urban Muslim families. However, this expansion remains practical in nature and has not yet been fully formalized within contemporary NU family jurisprudential discourse (Yasin et al., 2023)

Socially, NU women also play a role in building inter-community networks through PKK, BKOW, and inter-organizational religious activities. However, this involvement is often still limited to an “acceptable public participation” space, meaning participation is framed within traditional gender norms of propriety (Mrs. D, 2025).

In the digital economic sphere, NU women have utilized social media as a new economic space while still emphasizing halal-haram boundaries in their activities. Interestingly, this digital transformation does not lead to economic secularization; instead, it strengthens Islamic business ethics based on *maqāṣid*. One informant, a university lecturer, highlighted efforts to strengthen Islamic business ethics through digital halal certification in a business she runs with her husband (Mrs. E, 2025). Some women also rely heavily on individual capacity within collective systems, becoming MSME leaders and resource persons in halal product programs. The findings further reveal tensions between modernity and local religious authority in shaping NU women's gender roles. As one informant stated:

“As a civil servant, I must share childcare responsibilities with my husband.” (Mrs. E, 2025)

This shows that NU women are adapting to modern socio-economic changes, while local religious authority remains a key factor in negotiating gender roles and family responsibilities within urban households.

2. Discussion

a. *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah* as a Transformative Ethical Framework

The transformation of gender roles within urban Muslim families can no longer be understood statically as a rigid division of roles between men and women, but rather as a dynamic process shaped by social, economic, and cultural changes. In this context, women are not merely confined to domestic functions, but also play active roles in maintaining the economic and moral stability of the family. This perspective aligns with the framework of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*, which emphasizes the importance of safeguarding public welfare through the protection of religion, life, intellect, wealth, and lineage. Accordingly, women's participation in the public sphere should not be viewed as a deviation from Islamic norms, but rather as part of the realization of the objectives of Islamic law within the modern context (Krismiyarsi & Adityo, 2025). Such participation demonstrates that Islamic legal objectives can function adaptively in response to changing social realities.

Furthermore, contemporary studies demonstrate that *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah* has evolved from a merely normative concept into a methodological approach capable of bridging religious texts and continuously changing social realities (Lathifah dkk., 2025).

In this regard, *maqāṣid* functions as a flexible ethical framework for responding to modern issues such as gender equality, family resilience, and economic transformation. This is reflected in various studies emphasizing that *maqāṣid* is not solely intended to preserve legal stability, but also to promote social justice and collective welfare within contemporary Muslim societies (Nazah et al., 2025). The findings of this study support this perspective by showing that NU women reinterpret Islamic values pragmatically in order to sustain family resilience amid urban economic and social pressures. Thus, *maqāṣid* operates not only as a theological concept, but also as a living ethical framework embedded in everyday family practices.

In addition, women's roles across various sectors of life, including the economic and social spheres, indicate that the implementation of *maqāṣid* is contextual and adaptive. Women are no longer positioned as passive objects within social systems, but as active subjects in realizing collective welfare (Ahmed, 2021). Recent studies even suggest that women's contributions in areas such as environmental sustainability and economic development represent part of the expansion of *maqāṣidī ijtihād*, positioning women as strategic actors in social development (Auda, 2008).

Nevertheless, this transformation is not free from challenges, particularly regarding the imbalance of role burdens and resistance to changes in social structures. Although women have increasingly entered the public sphere, domestic responsibilities often remain disproportionately attached to them, resulting in a double burden. From the perspective of *maqāṣid*, this condition reflects the incomplete realization of the principles of justice and balance within the family, which should constitute the primary objective of Islamic law in preserving both individual and collective welfare (Danil et al., 2025).

Overall, these findings challenge the assumption that gender transformation within urban Muslim families necessarily leads to full equality or the complete deconstruction of masculine dominance. Instead, what emerges in Gorontalo is a hybrid model: negotiated masculine dominance, limited egalitarianism, and the contextual implementation of *maqāṣid*. Accordingly, NU women in Gorontalo are not merely objects of social change, but active subjects who reshape the meaning of the urban Muslim family through a combination of local custom, Islam, and the demands of modernity. Nevertheless, this transformation remains ambivalent: progressive in practice, yet conservative in symbolic legitimacy (Suripto & Khuriyah, 2024).

b. Hybrid Patriarchy and the Persistence of Symbolic Authority

Although the transformation of gender roles within urban Muslim families demonstrates significant developments, the findings of this study confirm that structures of masculine dominance have not entirely disappeared. Instead, they have undergone processes of adaptation and reconfiguration, producing a more flexible form commonly referred to in contemporary literature as *hybrid patriarchy*. In this form, masculine dominance no longer appears in rigid or overtly repressive ways, but operates through subtler mechanisms such as cultural norms, symbolic legitimacy, and the internalization of values. Thus, the changes taking place do not represent the elimination of old structures, but rather their transformation into more contextual and adaptive forms that allow masculine dominance to persist (Moghaddam, 2006). This indicates that modernization often reshapes patriarchal authority instead of eliminating it entirely.

In practice, NU women in Gorontalo have gained increasingly broader spaces within various aspects of family life, including economic contribution and domestic decision-making. They actively participate in productive activities and, in some cases,

become the primary economic providers for their families. Nevertheless, at the same time, they continue to acknowledge and reproduce symbols of masculine dominance, such as the husband's position as the head of the household (*qawwam*). This reflects a complex compromise between progressive social change and the continuity of traditional norms. Women do not entirely reject masculine dominance structures; rather, they transform them into negotiated spaces that allow them to maintain agency without negating existing religious and social legitimacy (Damis et al., 2025). Such negotiation demonstrates that women's empowerment within urban Muslim families often develops through accommodation rather than confrontation.

This phenomenon can be understood through Kandiyoti's (2007) concept of *patriarchal bargaining*, in which women strategically negotiate their position within systems of masculine dominance in order to obtain certain spaces of autonomy (Datta, 2020). In this context, NU women do not confront masculine dominance directly, but adapt it through everyday practices such as family deliberation, more flexible role distribution, and participation in the household economy. Recent studies further confirm that masculine dominance in many Muslim societies has not disintegrated, but rather transformed into more elastic forms compatible with modernity.

Within the socio-cultural context of Gorontalo, masculine dominance does not appear in explicit forms of domination, but rather as a system of values internalized through customary traditions and religious practices. Values such as family honor (*bubato*), propriety (*malembungo*), and gentleness (*momayango*) function as social mechanisms reinforcing masculine dominance symbolically. Because these forms are embedded within cultural and religious frameworks, they become more difficult to identify as inequality, as they are often perceived as part of ideal morality and ethics. Consequently, masculine dominance operates not through coercion, but through social consensus and value legitimacy (Sultan et al., 2025). This normalization makes patriarchal authority more difficult to identify because it is intertwined with respected cultural and religious values.

Nevertheless, this hybrid form of masculine dominance also creates significant flexibility for women. Because it is not rigid, the structure allows women to participate in various fields, including the economy, education, and socio-religious activities. In this context, NU women are not merely objects of masculine dominance structures, but also active agents who reshape their boundaries. They utilize openings within the system to expand their roles without generating open conflict with prevailing norms. This demonstrates that masculine dominance does not always function as an absolute limitation, but may also become a dynamic space of negotiation (Fathoni, 2021). Such flexibility reflects the adaptive nature of gender relations within contemporary Muslim urban families.

However, such flexibility does not automatically eliminate structural inequality. Women continue to face a double burden between domestic responsibilities and public roles, indicating that the redistribution of roles has not been fully achieved. In other words, although women have obtained broader participation spaces, the structure of family responsibilities remains unequal. This suggests that the transformation taking place is more practical than structural, allowing inequality to persist in more concealed forms (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). As a result, women's expanded participation may coexist with continuing emotional and domestic pressures.

From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*, this phenomenon may be understood as a partial process toward realizing justice and welfare within the family. On the one hand, women's involvement in economic activities and decision-making reflects efforts to preserve *ḥifẓ al-māl* (protection of wealth) and *ḥifẓ al-nasl* (protection of family

continuity) (Nazah dkk., 2025). On the other hand, the double burden they experience indicates that *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of the self) and *ḥifẓ al-'ird* (protection of dignity) have not yet been fully realized. Therefore, gender transformation within this context still requires further reinterpretation to align with the principle of substantive justice embedded within *maqāṣid* (Ar-Raysūni, 1995). This demonstrates that Islamic ethical objectives remain relevant for evaluating contemporary gender relations within Muslim families.

From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*, the findings regarding women's efforts to preserve religious gatherings (*pengajian*) may be understood as attempts to uphold *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (protection of religion) and *ḥifẓ al-'aql* (protection of intellect). Religious gatherings function not only to preserve worship practices, but also to cultivate moral and spiritual consciousness within urban society. Thus, NU women act as guardians of the continuity of moderate Islamic values amid rapid social change.

When analyzed through the lens of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*, this transformation strongly relates to the principles of protecting religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). Women's active participation in public and economic spheres does not inherently contradict Islamic law, as long as it remains grounded in Islamic moral and ethical values. Accordingly, the transformation of gender roles within the family can be understood as an actualization of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* in the modern context (Said et al., 2025). This perspective highlights the adaptive and contextual character of Islamic social ethics in responding to contemporary realities.

Overall, gender transformation within NU families in Gorontalo is hybrid and ambivalent in nature. It is progressive in practice. It opens broader spaces for women's participation, yet conservative in legitimacy because it continues to preserve symbols of masculine dominance. This condition challenges the assumption that modernization will automatically lead to full gender equality. Instead, what emerges is a complex process of negotiation between religion, culture, and modernity, in which women become key actors in reshaping social structures without entirely abandoning existing normative frameworks.

D. Conclusion

This study confirms that women in urban Muslim families can no longer be understood merely as domestic actors but have evolved into strategic agents in maintaining family resilience through interconnected spiritual, social, and economic roles. Women's involvement in strengthening household economies, educating children, and preserving religious values reflects a contextual transformation of gender roles that aligns with the principles of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, particularly in safeguarding religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), and family continuity (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). In the context of Gorontalo, this transformation takes place through the integration of Islamic values and local cultural traditions such as *tutuhu*, *bubato*, and *momayango*.

More specifically, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) women, particularly those affiliated with Muslimat NU and Lakpesdam NU, demonstrate an important role in strengthening urban family resilience through religious gatherings, Islamic literacy, sharia economic practices, and social solidarity. Nevertheless, this transformation remains ambivalent. On the one hand, women have gained broader spaces for participation, while on the other hand domestic responsibility structures and symbols of masculine dominance continue to persist in more flexible forms. Thus, the gender

transformation taking place reflects a form of *hybrid patriarchy*, namely a social relation that is progressive in practice yet still conservative in symbolic legitimacy.

E. Acknowledgements

The authors express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Editorial Team of AKADEMIKA: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam, Muslimat NU, and to the late Mrs. Supiah, whose life and values inspired this work. The authors also extend their appreciation to Emsa Group as a regular donor that has provided continuous support for this research.

F. Author Contributions Statement

NM was fully responsible for writing the manuscript, including developing the concept, collecting and analyzing the data, and preparing the final report. Meanwhile, MSA, and RH contributed to refining the manuscript by providing input, clarifying data, and offering substantive improvements to the overall study.

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