

Husband and Wife Obligations and Rights in Indonesian Migrant Worker Households: A Maqashid Syariah Perspective in Ender Village, Cirebon

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: 2026-08-30 Revised: 2026-09-20 Accepted: 2026-10-14 Keywords: Husband and wife rights and obligations; Indonesian migrant workers; Long-distance family; Maqashid syariah.	This study examines how husbands and wives fulfil their rights and obligations in Indonesian migrant worker households in Ender Village, Cirebon Regency, from the perspective of maqashid syariah. The study used a qualitative descriptive-analytical case study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation involving seven informants and were analysed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model based on the five essential elements of daruriyat. The findings show different levels of fulfilment across the five dimensions. Hifz al-mal was the most strongly fulfilled, followed by hifz al-din, while hifz al-nasl and hifz al-'aql were fulfilled adaptively. Hifz al-nafs was the most vulnerable dimension because emotional needs and direct companionship were difficult to replace through digital communication. The findings show that physical separation does not eliminate marital rights and obligations but changes the way they are fulfilled. The quality and continuity of communication appeared to be more important for maintaining marital relationships than the length of separation. The study concludes that maqashid syariah can accommodate the changing roles of husbands and wives in migrant worker households when adaptations are based on mutual agreement and continue to protect the essential purposes of family life.
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A. Introduction

International labour migration has become an important livelihood strategy for many rural households in Indonesia. However, migration can separate husbands and wives for a long period of time. Although the marriage remains legally valid, husband and wife must fulfil their rights and obligations while living in different places. Communication technology, financial support, childcare, and the division of family roles therefore become important parts of married life. Migrant worker households are different from households in which husbands and wives live together, especially in their patterns of communication, division of roles, and family well-being (Faidati & Maratus, 2025; Faristiana, 2025). A comparison of long-distance and conventional couples further shows that the two arrangements differ most clearly in the way emotional and economic well-being are maintained (Fazila & Nugroho, 2024). This situation raises an important question in Islamic family law: how can the rights and obligations of husband and wife be fulfilled when they cannot live together physically?

This issue is important because the number of Indonesian migrant workers remains high. The Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Agency recorded 25,643 workers placed abroad in January 2025, an increase of 1.46 per cent from 25,273 in December 2024, although the number was 5.76 per cent lower than the 27,211 workers recorded in January 2024. Malaysia was the largest destination, receiving 8,014 workers or 31.25 per cent of the total placements. Cirebon Regency was also one of the five largest migrant worker-sending districts in Indonesia in the first quarter of 2025, with 2,630 workers out of 71,392 placements (Badan Pelindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia [BP2MI], 2025). This pattern continued in 2026. Between January and March 2026, Cirebon Regency sent 2,448 migrant workers out of 65,813 national placements and ranked fourth nationally (BP2MI, 2026). These

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data show that family separation because of labour migration is not an individual or temporary problem. It is a social reality experienced by many families, particularly in migrant-sending areas.

The Indonesian government has provided legal protection for migrant workers through Law Number 18 of 2017 on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers. The law defines an Indonesian migrant worker as an Indonesian citizen who will work, is working, or has worked for wages outside the territory of the Republic of Indonesia (Republik Indonesia, 2017). The protection includes employment, placement, social security, wages, and repatriation. However, the law mainly focuses on the protection of migrant workers and does not specifically explain how husband and wife should fulfil their marital rights and obligations when one spouse works abroad. This creates an important gap between the protection of migrant workers and the protection of marital relationships. The situation can be clearly seen in Ender Village, Pangenan District, Cirebon Regency. The village has 1,203 households and records 56 male and 179 female migrant workers (Pemerintah Desa Ender, 2026). Thus, female migrant workers are much more numerous than male migrant workers. In many households, the wife works abroad while the husband remains at home and takes a greater role in childcare and household responsibilities. This condition changes the traditional division of roles between husband and wife and raises questions about how their rights and obligations are practised in everyday family life.

The situation in migrant worker households also needs to be examined in relation to Indonesian marriage law and Islamic family law. Law Number 1 of 1974 on Marriage (Republik Indonesia, 1974), as amended by Law Number 16 of 2019 (Republik Indonesia, 2019), and the Compilation of Islamic Law (Republik Indonesia, 1991) explain that husband and wife should love, respect, remain faithful to each other, and treat each other well. The husband is also generally placed as the person responsible for providing for the family. In the Qur'an, Surah al-Nisa' verse 34 describes the husband's responsibility to protect and provide for his wife (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2021). These provisions are important foundations for understanding marital rights and obligations. However, their application becomes more complex when husband and wife live in different countries for a long period. Financial support may be provided through money transfers, emotional support may be provided through digital communication, and childcare may be shared between the spouse who remains at home and other family members. Therefore, the fulfilment of marital rights and obligations cannot always be understood only through physical presence.

Previous research supports the view that physical separation does not necessarily mean that a marriage has failed. Studies of Islamic law on long-distance marriage show that such marriages can remain valid when both spouses continue to make efforts to fulfil their main obligations (Tanjung & Ariyadi, 2021). However, this situation requires a broader understanding of marital rights and obligations. The important issue is not only whether the husband or wife follows a particular legal form, but also whether the purposes of Islamic law are achieved in the family. This is especially relevant to migrant worker households, where traditional family roles can change because of economic needs and long-term separation.

The changing role of women in migrant worker households also requires attention. The increasing number of female migrant workers can change the traditional understanding of family provision and authority. Mumtazah et al. (2026) show that female migration can transform the way family maintenance is provided and managed. In addition, digital technology has changed the way husbands, wives, and children communicate while living apart. Digital communication can help maintain emotional relationships, although it cannot completely replace physical interaction (Mirzayanti et al., 2025; Rosida, 2022). These changes show that the rights and obligations of husband and wife in migrant households need to be studied based on their actual family practices, rather than only on the traditional model of a family living under one roof.

For this reason, *maqashid syariah* provides a relevant framework for analysing the rights and obligations of husband and wife in migrant worker households. *Maqashid syariah* refers to the purposes and benefits that Islamic law seeks to achieve for human beings. Al-Shatibi (1997), through *al-Muwafaqat fi Ushul al-Shari'ah*, divides human needs into three levels: *daruriyat* (essential needs), *hajiyat* (complementary needs), and *tahsiniyat* (needs that improve human life). At the level of

daruriyat, five basic elements must be protected: religion (hifz al-din), life and self (hifz al-nafs), intellect (hifz al-'aql), lineage and family (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal) (Al-Shatibi, 1997; Al Ikhlas et al., 2021). This framework makes it possible to examine marital life not only from the question of whether a husband or wife performs a formal obligation, but also from the question of whether the essential purposes of marriage and family life are protected.

Recent studies indicate that maqashid syariah remains relevant to contemporary family forms, including families in which husbands and wives live apart (Ilyas et al., 2025; Sadati et al., 2026). From this perspective, the rights and obligations of husband and wife can be assessed through the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. For example, financial support can be related to hifz al-mal, childcare and family continuity to hifz al-nasl, emotional and psychological well-being to hifz al-nafs and hifz al-'aql, and religious practices to hifz al-din. Therefore, maqashid syariah provides a broader approach for understanding whether migrant worker households are able to maintain the essential purposes of family life despite physical separation.

Several previous studies have examined migrant worker families and long-distance marriages. Faidati and Maratus (2025) studied migrant worker families in Sutojayan, Blitar, and found that family resilience depends on the ability of family members to adapt to changes in roles. However, their study used a normative-sociological approach and did not examine the fulfilment of the five maqashid dimensions. Mumtazah et al. (2026) examined changes in family maintenance among female migrant worker families in Kaliwedi, Cirebon Regency. They found dominant and collaborative patterns in the transformation of family roles. However, their maqashid analysis mainly focused on hifz al-mal and hifz al-nasl. Saidah and Fahmi (2023) studied the management of long-distance marriage among female migrant worker families in Kendal Regency using maslahah theory and structural functionalism. Their study did not separately examine the five elements of daruriyat.

Other studies have applied maqashid syariah to long-distance marriages, but not specifically to Indonesian migrant worker households. Ilyas et al. (2025) studied long-distance couples in Bua District and found that hifz al-nafs, hifz al-'aql, hifz al-nasl, and hifz al-mal could still be achieved when families maintained spiritual, emotional, and economic balance. Sadati et al. (2026) examined university lecturers in long-distance marriages and introduced the idea of adaptive qiwamah. Meanwhile, Sari et al. (2025) studied potential conflicts in long-distance marriages in Sarabau Village, Cirebon Regency, and found that unstable communication was a major source of conflict. However, the study did not systematically examine how the rights and obligations of husband and wife were fulfilled from a maqashid syariah perspective.

Based on these studies, three research gaps can be identified. First, previous studies have not sufficiently examined the rights and obligations of husbands and wives in migrant worker households through all five essential elements of maqashid syariah. Second, there is limited research on villages where female migrant workers are more numerous than male migrant workers, even though this situation creates significant changes in family roles. Third, previous studies tend to examine economic conditions, family resilience, or communication separately, while the relationship between these aspects and the fulfilment of marital rights and obligations remains insufficiently explained.

Therefore, this study focuses on the obligations and rights of husband and wife in Indonesian migrant worker households from the perspective of maqashid syariah, with Ender Village, Pangenan District, Cirebon Regency, as the research setting. The study examines how husbands and wives fulfil their marital rights and obligations during physical separation and how these practices relate to the five essential elements of maqashid syariah. By focusing on the lived experiences of migrant worker households in Ender Village, this study seeks to provide a more contextual understanding of Islamic family law and to show how marital rights and obligations can be maintained in changing family conditions.

B. Methods

This study used a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach. This approach was selected because the study focuses on the experiences, attitudes, roles, and practices of husbands and wives in

migrant worker households. These aspects require an in-depth understanding of the informants' experiences and cannot be adequately explained through numerical measurement.

The study employed a case study design. A case study allows the researcher to examine a particular case in depth within its real-life context. The case in this study was the fulfilment of the rights and obligations of husbands and wives in Indonesian migrant worker households in Ender Village, Pangenan District, Cirebon Regency. Ender Village was selected because it has a considerable number of migrant workers and is dominated by female migrant workers. Data collection was conducted from June to July 2026.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling. The main criterion was that the informant was a husband or wife from a migrant worker household in Ender Village in which one spouse works or is preparing to work abroad. Seven informants were included in the study, consisting of three husbands whose wives work abroad and four women who work or were preparing to work abroad. Data collection continued until the information obtained showed recurring patterns and no substantial new information emerged. The profile of the informants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile Of The Research Informants

Code	Initials	Age	Status	Destination	Time Abroad	Children
W-01	S	43	Husband left behind	Hong Kong	8 months	2
W-02	K	40	Husband left behind	Saudi Arabia	4 months	1
W-03	IR	44	Husband left behind	Malaysia	10 months	2
W-04	Nur	41	Wife (prospective)	Hong Kong	About to depart	1
W-05	R	24	Migrant wife	Taiwan	1 year	1
W-06	NW	33	Migrant wife	Taiwan	3 years	2
W-07	Zam	42	Migrant wife	Macau	13 years	4

W-04 was included because she was in the preparation stage of migration and could provide information about how a wife and mother understands her marital rights and obligations before physical separation. Her experience was used as supporting data and was distinguished from the experiences of wives who had already migrated. The interview guide was developed based on the five essential dimensions of *maqashid syariah*: *hifz al-din*, *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-'aql*, *hifz al-nasl*, and *hifz al-mal*. Each dimension was connected to questions about the rights and obligations of husband and wife. Questions related to *hifz al-din* focused on family worship, religious guidance, and the supervision of children's religious practices. Questions related to *hifz al-nafs* examined family harmony, emotional needs, communication, and conflict resolution. Questions related to *hifz al-'aql* focused on children's education, educational costs, and parental guidance. Questions related to *hifz al-nasl* examined childcare, children's supervision, and the continuity of family relationships. Questions related to *hifz al-mal* focused on sources of income, remittances, financial management, and household needs.

The study used three data collection techniques. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted using a prepared list of questions while allowing informants to explain their experiences freely. Second, observation was conducted to understand the household situation and the living environment of the informants. Third, documentation was used to collect supporting information, including village population data, migrant worker data, and field notes. Data were analysed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model, which consists of three main activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction was conducted by identifying information related to the rights and obligations of husbands and wives and grouping the findings according to the five dimensions of *maqashid syariah*. The reduced data were then displayed through thematic descriptions and selected quotations from the informants. Conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns across the informants and interpreting these patterns in relation to the five *daruriyat* dimensions and relevant provisions of Islamic family law.

The analysis was conducted through several cycles. First, interview transcripts and field notes were read repeatedly. Second, relevant statements were given initial codes. Third, the codes were grouped into the five dimensions of *maqashid syariah*. Fourth, similarities and differences among informants were compared. Finally, the emerging patterns were interpreted to understand how the rights and obligations of husbands and wives were fulfilled during physical separation. The level of fulfilment of each *maqashid* dimension was assessed qualitatively based on three considerations: (1) the consistency of informants' statements, (2) the existence of a person, communication channel, or other mechanism that supported the fulfilment of the right or obligation, and (3) the presence or absence of problems reported by the informants in relation to that dimension. Based on these considerations, the findings were described using qualitative categories such as high, fairly high, adaptive, and vulnerable. These categories were not numerical scores but descriptive summaries of the patterns found in the data.

The credibility of the data was maintained through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing statements from husbands and migrant wives. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing interview findings with observations and documentation. The researcher also compared recurring information across informants to identify consistent patterns and differences. Before data collection, all informants were informed about the purpose of the study, the use of the data, and their right to participate voluntarily. Informed consent was obtained before the interviews. To protect their privacy, the identities of all informants were disguised using the codes W-01 to W-07.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Result

An Overview Of Migrant Worker Families In Ender Village

Ender Village is located on the northern coast of Java and is relatively accessible from the centre of Cirebon City. Most residents depend on farming, fishing, and small-scale trade, which provide income that can vary according to season and market conditions. In recent years, working abroad has become an important livelihood strategy for some families. This choice is influenced not only by the expectation of higher income but also by social networks of relatives and neighbours who have previously worked abroad. The distribution of Indonesian migrant workers from Ender Village by sex is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution Of Indonesian Migrant Workers From Ender Village By Sex

No.	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Male migrant workers	56 persons	23.8%
2	Female migrant workers	179 persons	76.2%
Total		235 persons	100%

The data show that female migrant workers account for 76.2% of the migrant workers from Ender Village, while male migrant workers account for 23.8%. This composition is important for understanding changes in the division of roles between husbands and wives. In many households, the wife works abroad while the husband remains at home and takes greater responsibility for childcare and household activities. At the same time, the migrant wife contributes significantly to the family income. Thus, migration creates a temporary redistribution of some family functions without necessarily removing the basic rights and obligations of husband and wife.

The main destinations include Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Macau, and Malaysia. The informants worked mainly in domestic service, elderly care, factory work, and hotel housekeeping. Some of these jobs involve long working hours and, particularly in domestic work, living in the employer's home. These conditions can limit the opportunity to communicate with family members and may make communication dependent on working schedules or employer rules. The pattern is consistent with national data showing that domestic and care work are among the common employment sectors for Indonesian migrant workers (BP2MI, 2025).

The destination and type of employment also influence the pattern of family communication. Informants working in Taiwan and Macau reported relatively regular communication because their working schedules provided more predictable opportunities to contact their families. In contrast, those working in domestic service experienced greater limitations because communication depended more heavily on work conditions and the employer's schedule. This difference provides an important context for understanding the different levels of fulfilment of husband and wife rights and obligations discussed in the following sections.

The Practice Of Spousal Obligations And Rights In The Maqashid Perspective

Interviews with the seven informants indicate that physical separation does not eliminate the rights and obligations of husbands and wives. Instead, these responsibilities are adapted through communication, financial support, childcare arrangements, and the involvement of family members. However, the level of fulfilment differs across the five dimensions of maqashid syariah: hifz al-din, hifz al-nafs, hifz al-'aql, hifz al-nasl, and hifz al-mal.

a. Hifz al-din (protection of religion). The findings show that religious guidance within migrant worker families continues despite physical separation. Parents use telephone and video calls to remind children about worship and religious activities. W-01, for example, reported that he contacted his children “every day” to maintain their religious practice. In the family of W-03, the husband took a greater role in childcare and religious guidance, explaining that he “takes on the mother's role as well.” In the family of W-02, children's worship was monitored through video calls.

In al-Shatibi's framework, hifz al-din is one of the five essential elements of daruriyat and must therefore be protected (Al Ikhlās et al., 2021). The findings indicate that this function can continue even when one parent is abroad. The form of religious guidance changes from direct supervision to remote communication and monitoring. This finding is consistent with Ilyas et al. (2025), who show that changes in the form of family practices do not necessarily mean that the purpose of the practice is lost.

However, remote supervision also has limitations. A parent who lives abroad depends on information from the child or the caregiver at home. Therefore, the fulfilment of hifz al-din is relatively strong in functional terms but remains dependent on the presence of another caregiver. Safithri et al. (2023) show that pesantren scholars in Jember assess long-distance marriage contextually and emphasise that both spouses must continue to perform their religious duties while living apart. Read alongside the present findings, this suggests that in migrant families religious guidance can be maintained through a combination of parental communication and support from family members at home.

b. Hifz al-nafs (protection of self and emotional life). Among the five dimensions, hifz al-nafs presents the greatest challenge. The findings show that emotional support, affection, companionship, and harmonious communication are more difficult to maintain when husband and wife live apart. Some couples were able to maintain their relationship through regular communication and mutual understanding. W-01 explained that household problems were usually resolved by “giving in.” W-03 maintained the relationship through “mutual trust and good communication,” while disagreements were sometimes managed by giving each other time before discussing the problem again.

However, not all families experienced the same situation. W-02 reported that the relationship was no longer harmonious because communication with his wife was severely limited. He felt that some marital rights were “unmet.” This finding is consistent with Afdal et al. (2022), who found that marital satisfaction in long-distance marriages can decline when affection and emotional needs are not adequately maintained. This finding is important for understanding the rights and obligations of husband and wife. Emotional care cannot be fully replaced by financial support or delegated to another family member. Tanjung and Ariyadi (2021) similarly show that physical separation does not automatically invalidate a marriage as long as the main obligations continue to be pursued. However, the emotional dimension requires more than the continuation of economic support.

At the same time, limited emotional fulfilment should not immediately be interpreted as personal negligence. Communication can be restricted by working conditions in the destination country. Therefore, the ability of spouses to fulfil their emotional obligations depends not only on their willingness but also on their structural opportunities to communicate. Sari et al. (2025) identify unstable communication as an important trigger of conflict in long-distance marriages in Cirebon Regency, while Desiana et al. (2024) emphasise communication behaviour in maintaining harmony among couples who live apart.

c. Hifz al-'aql (protection of intellect). The protection of children's intellect is maintained mainly through continued schooling, financial support for education, and remote parental monitoring. When one parent migrates, the spouse who remains at home or another family member may take over daily supervision. In the family of W-03, the husband assumed a greater role in childcare. W-05 entrusted her child to the grandmother, while W-06 continued to monitor her children from a distance. In W-02's family, childcare was supported by the wife's younger sibling, while communication technology was used for additional monitoring.

These findings show that children's educational needs continue to receive attention, but the form of parental involvement changes. School fees can generally be supported through migrant income, while daily study guidance depends more heavily on the caregiver at home. Therefore, hifz al-'aql can be classified as adaptive but limited. Faristiana (2025) notes that migrant worker families may face intergenerational social challenges that can influence children's development and educational support. From a maqashid perspective, protecting intellect involves more than ensuring school attendance; it also involves guidance, supervision, and the development of children's capacity to learn and make sound decisions.

d. Hifz al-nasl (protection of lineage). The findings indicate that childcare and family continuity remain important concerns for migrant worker households. When one parent works abroad, these responsibilities are commonly shared between the spouse who remains at home and other family members. W-07 expressed concern about being “far from the children and unable to watch over them.” This statement shows that physical separation creates limitations in direct supervision. In contrast, the presence of the husband, grandparents, or other relatives allows childcare responsibilities to continue. The experience of W-04 should be understood differently because she was preparing to migrate and had not yet experienced long-term physical separation. Her statement about “holding back how much I miss my child” reflects an expectation and concern about future separation rather than an observed experience of migrant family life. Therefore, her account is treated as supporting information rather than primary evidence for the condition of families already separated by migration.

The involvement of grandparents and other relatives provides an important substitute for daily parental care. However, such arrangements may also create additional responsibilities for caregivers. Ekawati et al. (2024) show that childcare entrusted to grandmothers creates a particular family dynamic because older women may already have multiple responsibilities. Therefore, hifz al-nasl can be described as adaptive, because family continuity and childcare remain protected, although direct parental supervision is reduced.

e. Hifz al-mal (protection of property). Hifz al-mal is the most strongly fulfilled dimension in the Ender Village migrant households studied. Migrant work provides a regular source of income for many families, and female migrant workers play an important role as family providers. W-01 stated that “daily needs are covered by my wife,” while W-06 reported that she “sends money every month.” W-07 also regularly sends money to meet family needs. This finding represents a change in the conventional division of economic roles in which the husband is positioned as the main provider. Article 34 of Law Number 1 of 1974 and Article 80 of the Compilation of Islamic Law place the husband as the provider for the family. However, the findings show that the wife may temporarily become the main economic provider because of the family's circumstances.

This role change does not necessarily mean that the husband's normative responsibility has disappeared. Mumtazah et al. (2026) found similar patterns among female migrant families in Cirebon

Regency, where women's economic contributions can take dominant or collaborative forms. Sadati et al. (2026) similarly propose the concept of adaptive *qiwamah*, in which family responsibilities can be carried out flexibly according to circumstances while maintaining their underlying purpose. Therefore, the economic role of migrant wives can be understood as an adaptation of family responsibilities rather than an automatic rejection of the husband's normative responsibility. The important condition is that the arrangement should be based on mutual agreement and should contribute to the welfare of the family. However, the economic success of migration should not be considered sufficient by itself. If the migrant wife carries the main economic burden while the husband does not take on corresponding responsibilities at home, the arrangement may create an unequal burden. Al Firda et al. (2021) show that an unequal division of family roles produces a double burden for women in rural households; the present findings indicate that the same mechanism can operate in the opposite direction, placing a double burden on the husband who remains at home. Thus, *hifz al-mal* should be considered together with *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-nasl*, and *hifz al-'aql*.

Mediating Channels in the Fulfilment of Marital Rights and Obligations

Taken together, the five dimensions show that the rights and obligations of husbands and wives in migrant worker households are fulfilled through several mediating channels. Physical separation does not remove these responsibilities, but changes the way they are carried out. The migrant spouse maintains family relationships through communication technology, financial support, and the assistance of family members who remain at home (Ekawati et al., 2024; Faristiana, 2025).

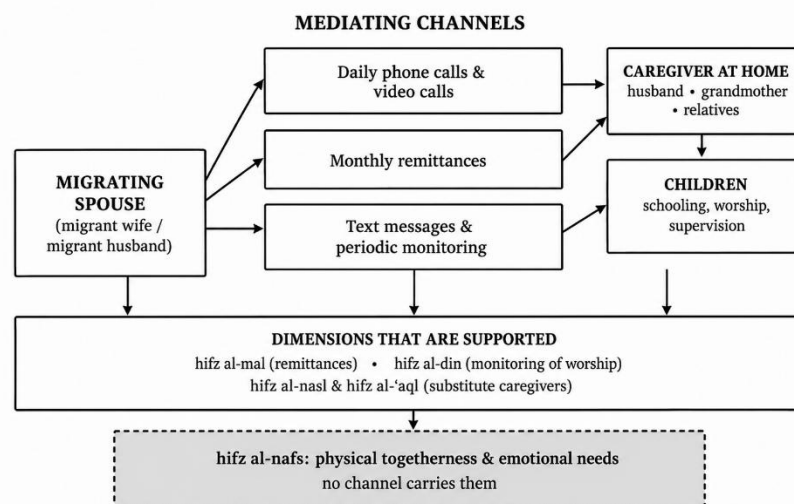


Figure 1. Mediating Channels in the Fulfilment of Husband and Wife Rights and Obligations Across Distance

Figure 1 shows that three main channels support the fulfilment of family responsibilities. First, telephone and video calls allow migrant spouses to communicate with their husbands, wives, and children. These channels support religious guidance, children's education, emotional communication, and family decision-making. Second, monthly remittances support household expenses and contribute directly to *hifz al-mal*. Third, substitute caregivers, such as the husband, wife, grandparents, or other relatives, help with childcare and children's daily supervision. These arrangements support *hifz al-nasl* and *hifz al-'aql*. However, these channels do not provide the same level of support for all five dimensions. Financial transfers can directly support *hifz al-mal*, while communication and substitute caregivers can support *hifz al-din*, *hifz al-nasl*, and *hifz al-'aql*. In contrast, *hifz al-nafs* remains more difficult to fulfil because emotional needs and physical companionship cannot be fully replaced by digital communication. Thus, the available channels reduce the difficulties caused by separation, but they do not completely remove the emotional effects of physical distance. This pattern is consistent with studies showing that digital communication and substitute caregiving can sustain several family

functions across distance, while emotional closeness remains the hardest to reproduce (Mirzayanti et al., 2025; Rosida, 2022).

Supporting And Inhibiting Factors

The fulfilment of husband and wife rights and obligations in migrant worker households is influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors. These factors are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Supporting And Inhibiting Factors In Carrying Out Spousal Obligations And Rights

No.	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
1	Intensive communication through phone and video calls	Irregular or interrupted communication
2	Mutual trust between husband and wife	Emotional burden caused by separation
3	Extended family support in childcare	Double role burden for the spouse at home
4	Shared goal of improving family income	Difficulty supervising children from a distance
5	Self-restraint and willingness to compromise	Emotional needs and attention are hard to meet

The most important supporting factors found in the interviews were regular communication and mutual trust. W-03 reported communicating with his wife “almost every day,” while W-06 stated that she communicates with her family “every day” by phone. Mutual trust was also mentioned by W-05 and W-07 as an important part of maintaining their marriages. These findings are consistent with Sawai et al. (2023), who found that love, trust, and commitment can help maintain long-distance relationships.

In contrast, communication problems were the most serious obstacle for some informants. W-02 reported that communication with his wife had become very limited and that this situation often caused misunderstanding. At the time of the interview, W-02 had been separated from his wife for four months. This case suggests that the duration of separation alone does not explain the condition of the relationship. The quality and continuity of communication appear to be more closely related to the ability of couples to maintain their relationship. Another important factor is the availability of support from the extended family. When grandparents or other relatives help with childcare, the migrant spouse can continue to contribute to the family from a distance. However, when such support is limited, the spouse who remains at home may experience a double burden. W-03, for example, reported having to manage household responsibilities and childcare at the same time. This condition shows that the adaptation of family roles can reduce one burden while creating another.

These factors can be understood as a relationship between resources and pressures. Communication, trust, family support, and shared economic goals function as buffers against the difficulties of separation. On the other hand, interrupted communication, emotional pressure, and unequal household responsibilities increase vulnerability. This finding is consistent with Hanifah et al. (2022), who identify social support and coping strategies as important factors in long-distance marriage, and with Chumayro et al. (2024), who discuss resilience among long-distance couples. Therefore, the important issue is not simply whether a migrant family experiences difficulties, because separation naturally creates difficulties. The more important issue is whether the family has sufficient buffering mechanisms to manage those difficulties. This helps explain why some families can maintain their marriage despite long periods of separation, while others experience serious relationship problems after a relatively shorter period.

The Hierarchy Of Daruriyat Fulfilment In Migrant Worker Families

The findings from Ender Village show that the five dimensions of maqashid syariah are fulfilled at different levels. The families studied do not simply succeed or fail in fulfilling their rights and obligations. Instead, they develop different forms of adaptation according to the type of family responsibility involved. The ranking in Table 4 was developed using three criteria described in the Methods section: (1) consistency of statements across informants, (2) the presence of a communication channel, substitute actor, or other mechanism supporting fulfilment, and (3) the presence or absence of problems reported by informants concerning each dimension.

Table 4. The Hierarchy Of Fulfilment Of The Five Daruriyat Dimensions In Migrant Families Of Ender Village

Daruriyat Dimension	Conventional Form	Adaptive Form In Migrant Families	Level Of Fulfilment	Supporting Informants
Hifz al-mal	Husband provides family income	Wife becomes the main provider through regular remittances; husband manages daily household needs	High	W-01, W-06, W-07
Hifz al-din	Religious guidance is provided directly	Children's worship is monitored through calls/video calls and guided by the parent or caregiver at home	Fairly high	W-01, W-02, W-03
Hifz al-nasl	Both parents provide direct childcare	Care is provided by the husband, grandmother, or relatives, with supervision from a distance	Adaptive	W-03, W-04, W-07
Hifz al-'aql	Parents provide direct study guidance	Schooling continues, while study guidance is supported by substitute caregivers and remote parental monitoring	Adaptive	W-02, W-05, W-06
Hifz al-nafs	Physical presence and direct emotional care	Emotional connection is maintained through communication, but physical presence cannot be fully replaced	Vulnerable	W-01, W-02, W-03

The table shows an important difference between the normative hierarchy of *maqashid syariah* and the empirical level of fulfilment found in the field. In the classical *maqashid* framework, the five *daruriyat* elements represent essential human interests that must be protected (Al Ikhlas et al., 2021). The Ender Village findings, however, show that these dimensions are not equally easy to maintain under conditions of physical separation.

Hifz al-mal appears to have the highest level of fulfilment because migrant work provides a relatively direct mechanism for supporting household income through remittances. In contrast, *hifz al-nafs* is the most vulnerable because emotional needs and physical companionship are more difficult to maintain through remote communication. The empirical pattern is therefore different from the normative priority of the *daruriyat* dimensions. This difference should not be interpreted as evidence that the normative hierarchy of *maqashid syariah* has changed. Rather, the two hierarchies describe different things. The normative hierarchy explains the priority of essential human interests within the *maqashid* framework, while the empirical hierarchy describes the relative level of fulfilment observed under the specific conditions of migrant families in Ender Village.

This distinction is important for understanding the actual problems faced by migrant families. A family may successfully protect its economic needs through remittances while still experiencing difficulties in emotional and relational life. Therefore, strong fulfilment of *hifz al-mal* cannot automatically compensate for weak fulfilment of *hifz al-nafs*. Likewise, the use of communication technology can reduce the effects of separation but cannot completely replace physical presence. The comparison between the two hierarchies therefore provides an important analytical finding. The largest gap is found in *hifz al-nafs*: it has high normative importance but the lowest empirical fulfilment in the families studied. This suggests that family support for migrant households should not focus only on economic welfare. Greater attention is also needed for communication, emotional support, marital relationships, and the psychological burden created by long-term separation.

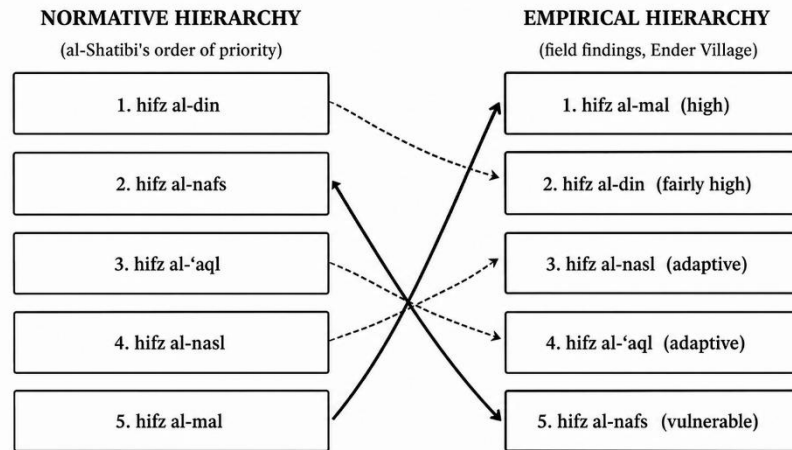


Figure 2. A Comparison Of The Normative And Empirical Hierarchies Of Daruriyat Fulfilment

2. Discussion

Dialogue With Previous Studies And Critical Reflection

The findings of this study extend the work of Faidati and Maratus (2025), who found that the resilience of Muslim migrant families depends on their ability to adapt to changes in family roles. The present study confirms this finding but shows that adaptation does not occur equally in all aspects of marital life. The rights and obligations related to economic support and household tasks can be adapted more easily, while emotional needs remain more difficult to fulfil. This finding adds an important dimension to the discussion of migrant family resilience because the fulfilment of marital obligations is not limited to financial support. It also includes emotional attention, communication, mutual care, and maintaining the relationship between husband and wife.

This finding also develops the study of Mumtazah et al. (2026), which focuses on hifz al-mal and hifz al-nasl in female migrant worker families. The present study shows that changes in the provider role cannot be separated from other marital responsibilities. When the wife becomes the main economic provider, the husband may take a greater role in childcare and household activities. However, the transfer of these functions does not mean that all rights and obligations can be completely transferred. Financial responsibilities can be supported through remittances, while childcare can be shared with the spouse who remains at home. Emotional needs, however, still require continuous interaction between husband and wife.

The findings also differ from the contexts studied by Ilyas et al. (2025) and Sadati et al. (2026), who examined maqashid syariah in long-distance marriages outside the context of international labour migration. Migrant worker families face a specific structural condition because communication is not always fully controlled by the husband and wife. Working hours, workplace conditions, and employer rules may limit the time available for communication. In other long-distance marriages, such as among academics or other professionals, couples may have greater control over when and how they communicate. This difference shows that the fulfilment of husband and wife rights and obligations should be understood not only from the willingness of the couple but also from the conditions that support or limit their ability to fulfil those obligations.

This point has an important implication for analysing marital rights and obligations. A failure to fulfil a particular obligation should not immediately be understood as negligence. It is necessary to distinguish between the willingness of husband and wife to fulfil their responsibilities and their actual ability to do so. For example, a migrant wife may continue to provide financial support but may have limited opportunities to communicate with her husband and children because of her working conditions. Likewise, a husband who remains in the village may take responsibility for childcare but

cannot fully replace the emotional presence of his wife. Therefore, the assessment of marital rights and obligations should consider both individual responsibility and structural circumstances.

The findings further show that physical separation does not automatically lead to the breakdown of a household. Most of the migrant families in Ender Village were able to maintain their marriages through an agreed division of roles. This finding is in line with Rismayanti et al. (2022) and Afdal et al. (2022), who found that marital satisfaction among long-distance couples can be maintained when appropriate relationship strategies are applied consistently. In the present study, the quality of communication appeared to be an important factor in maintaining the marital relationship. For example, W-07, who had worked abroad for thirteen years, was able to maintain her household relationship through continued communication. In contrast, W-02, who had been separated for only four months, experienced serious problems because communication with the spouse was interrupted. These cases suggest that the duration of separation alone does not determine family resilience. The quality and continuity of communication are more important factors.

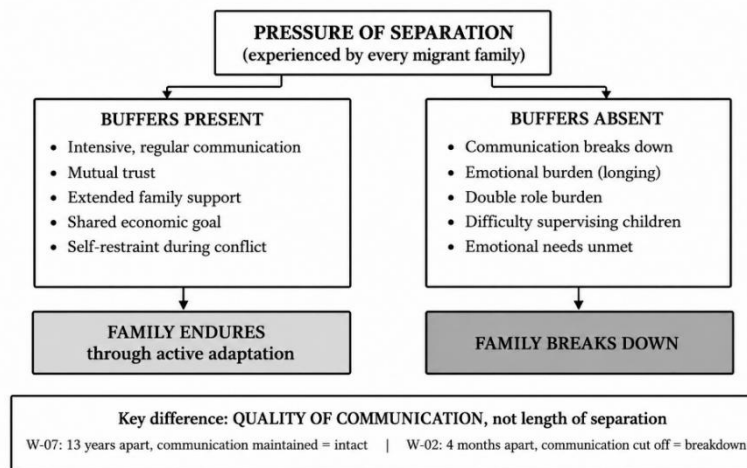


Figure 3. A Map Of Buffering Factors And The Direction Of Household Resilience In Migrant Families

Source: Research data analysis, 2026.

However, the ability of migrant families to maintain their marriage should be interpreted carefully. A legally intact marriage does not always mean that all marital rights and obligations have been fully fulfilled. Some families may experience emotional stress, loneliness, and fatigue even when the marriage continues. The husband who remains at home may carry additional responsibilities for childcare and household management, while the migrant wife may face work pressure and emotional distance from her family. Therefore, family resilience should not be understood only as the ability to avoid divorce. It should also include the ability of husband and wife to maintain their emotional relationship, mutual support, and family well-being.

The findings concerning *bifz al-nafs* also contribute to the discussion of *qiwamah*. Sadati et al. (2026) introduce the concept of adaptive *qiwamah*, which emphasises flexibility in carrying out family responsibilities. The findings from Ender Village support this idea but also show its limits. Some responsibilities can be adapted between husband and wife. A husband who remains at home can take greater responsibility for childcare and household activities, while a migrant wife can contribute significantly to household income. However, such adaptation does not mean that one spouse can completely replace the other in all aspects of marital life. Emotional support, affection, companionship, and direct interaction remain difficult to replace. Therefore, adaptive *qiwamah* can be understood as a partial adjustment of family functions rather than a complete transfer of all marital rights and obligations.

Wahid et al. (2025) argue that *maqashid syariah* can provide a framework for strengthening family resilience when it is applied carefully. The findings of this study support this view while also showing

the need for clear limits in applying the concept. Adaptation should still serve the main purposes of Islamic family law. First, the purpose of the adaptation must be genuinely achieved. For example, sending money may support *hifẓ al-māl*, but financial support alone cannot represent the complete fulfilment of marital responsibility if emotional and relational needs are ignored. Second, the division of roles should be based on mutual agreement between husband and wife. A one-sided transfer of responsibility may create an additional burden rather than a healthy adaptation. Third, adaptation should be accompanied by efforts to maintain or restore direct family interaction whenever possible.

Communication technology plays an important role in this process. Video calls and other digital communication tools allow migrant wives and husbands to communicate with each other and remain involved in children's lives. Through these channels, parents can ask about children's education, monitor religious activities, discuss household problems, and provide emotional support. However, digital communication cannot fully replace physical presence and direct companionship. Mirzayanti et al. (2025) show that spirituality and digital communication can work together to strengthen the resilience of long-distance couples, while Rosida (2022) highlights the importance of balanced communication in maintaining harmony in female migrant worker families. From the perspective of *maqashid syariah*, digital communication can therefore be viewed as an important supporting mechanism that reduces the difficulties caused by separation, but it cannot completely replace the direct fulfilment of all marital rights and obligations.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that the rights and obligations of husbands and wives in Indonesian migrant worker households do not disappear because of physical separation. Instead, they are adapted to the conditions of long-distance family life. From the perspective of *maqashid syariah*, the five essential dimensions are fulfilled at different levels. *Hifẓ al-māl* appears to be the most strongly maintained through continued income and financial support, with migrant wives playing an important role as family providers. *Hifẓ al-dīn* is maintained through religious guidance and communication from a distance. *Hifẓ al-nasl* and *hifẓ al-'aql* are fulfilled adaptively through the involvement of the spouse who remains at home and other family members in childcare and education. Meanwhile, *hifẓ al-nafs* is the most vulnerable dimension because emotional needs, affection, and direct companionship are more difficult to fulfil through digital communication. These findings indicate that the practical fulfilment of family rights and obligations does not always follow the normative order of the five *daruriyat* elements.

The study also identifies several factors that support and hinder the fulfilment of husband and wife rights and obligations. The main supporting factors are regular communication, mutual trust, support from extended family in childcare, and a shared commitment to improving the family's economic condition. The main challenges include irregular communication, emotional pressure, the additional household and childcare responsibilities carried by the spouse who remains at home, and difficulties in supervising children from a distance. The experiences of the informants suggest that the quality and continuity of communication are closely related to the ability of families to maintain their marital relationships. However, this finding should be understood within the context of this case study and does not mean that communication alone determines the survival or breakdown of a marriage.

From the perspective of *maqashid syariah*, the findings indicate that changes in the division of roles between husband and wife can be accommodated as long as the essential purposes of marriage and family life remain protected. Such adaptation should be based on mutual agreement, should genuinely fulfil the intended family needs, and should be accompanied by continuous efforts to maintain the marital relationship. Therefore, migrant worker households should prepare a clear communication plan before departure, including regular contact, ways to discuss family problems, and arrangements for childcare and decision-making. Religious Affairs Offices and migrant worker placement agencies should also consider including long-distance family issues in marriage guidance and pre-departure programmes, particularly regarding emotional support and communication. Future research should examine other migrant-sending areas, involve children of migrant workers as direct

informants, and compare families that maintain their marriages with those that experience marital breakdown.

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