

Women Work to Help their Husbands to Meet the Family's Needs: A Study of *Maqashid Al-Shariah*

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Abstract: *This study examines women's economic participation in supporting their husbands to meet family needs through the lens of Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis involving married working women, their husbands, and religious scholars. The findings reveal that women's economic contributions are primarily driven by economic necessity and a sense of mutual responsibility within marriage. Women's work significantly enhances family welfare, particularly in financial stability, education, and health. From the Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah perspective, women's economic participation aligns with the preservation of wealth, life, intellect, and lineage, and does not contradict religious principles when conducted ethically. However, women experience a double burden due to unequal domestic responsibilities. The study concludes that women's economic participation can be understood as an ethical practice consistent with Islamic objectives, highlighting the need for gender-equitable family roles and supportive socio-religious policies.*

Keywords: *women's work, family welfare, Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah, Islamic law, gender roles*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini mengkaji partisipasi ekonomi perempuan dalam membantu suami memenuhi kebutuhan keluarga melalui perspektif Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen terhadap perempuan bekerja yang telah menikah, suami, dan tokoh agama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kontribusi ekonomi perempuan didorong oleh kebutuhan ekonomi dan rasa tanggung jawab bersama dalam keluarga. Partisipasi ekonomi perempuan meningkatkan kesejahteraan keluarga, khususnya dalam stabilitas keuangan, pendidikan, dan kesehatan. Dari perspektif Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah, kerja perempuan selaras dengan tujuan menjaga harta, jiwa, akal, dan keturunan, serta tidak bertentangan dengan prinsip agama selama dilakukan secara etis. Namun, perempuan menghadapi beban ganda akibat ketimpangan pembagian kerja domestik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa partisipasi ekonomi perempuan merupakan praktik etis yang sejalan dengan tujuan syariat Islam dan menegaskan perlunya peran keluarga yang adil gender serta kebijakan sosial-keagamaan yang mendukung.*

Kata Kunci: *kerja perempuan, kesejahteraan keluarga, Maqāshid al-Sharī'ah, hukum Islam, peran gender*

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Introduction

The development In contemporary Muslim societies, the economic participation of women has become an increasingly significant phenomenon that reshapes family structures, gender relations, and socio-economic dynamics. Traditionally, Islamic jurisprudence assigns the primary responsibility of providing financial support for the family to men, particularly husbands, while women are encouraged to focus on domestic roles such as child-rearing and household management. However, socio-economic transformations, globalization, rising living costs, educational advancement, and shifting cultural norms have contributed to a growing number of women who engage in paid work to support their husbands and families. This phenomenon raises important questions regarding gender roles, Islamic legal principles, and the alignment of women's economic participation with the objectives of Islamic law, known as *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

The increasing participation of women in economic activities is not merely a social trend but a complex reality influenced by structural, economic, and cultural factors. Many families face economic pressures that necessitate dual-income households, and women often play a critical role in ensuring family financial stability and resilience. Empirical studies indicate that women's work significantly contributes to family welfare, income security, and socio-economic development, particularly in developing countries and Muslim-majority societies. In many contexts, women's dual roles as income earners and caregivers create a dynamic interplay between economic necessity and traditional gender expectations. Research has shown that women's economic participation can enhance family resilience by improving income levels, educational opportunities, and financial security (Rizqa, 2024).

From an Islamic perspective, the participation of women in the workforce has long been debated, with diverse interpretations among scholars regarding its permissibility, conditions, and implications for family and society. While classical Islamic jurisprudence recognizes men as the primary breadwinners, it does not prohibit women from working, especially when their participation contributes to family welfare and does not violate ethical or moral principles. Contemporary Islamic scholars increasingly emphasize the importance of understanding women's economic

roles through the framework of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, which focuses on human welfare, justice, and social well-being rather than rigid literalism. This shift reflects a broader movement within Islamic legal theory to contextualize religious norms in response to changing socio-economic realities.

Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah refers to the higher objectives or purposes of Islamic law, which aim to preserve and promote human well-being. Classical scholars such as al-Ghazālī and al-Shāṭibī systematized the theory of *Maqāṣid*, identifying five essential objectives: the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*). These objectives reflect a holistic framework that prioritizes human welfare, justice, and social stability. According to al-Shāṭibī, Islamic legal rulings are designed to achieve benefits and prevent harm, thus emphasizing the ethical and purposive nature of Islamic law (Al Ikhlas et al., 2020). Contemporary scholars such as Ibn 'Āshūr, Jasser Auda, and Mohammad Hashim Kamali have further expanded the scope of *Maqāṣid* to include values such as justice, freedom, dignity, and social welfare, reflecting the evolving needs of modern societies.

In the context of family economics, the preservation of wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*) are particularly relevant. Women's participation in economic activities can be viewed as a mechanism to preserve wealth and ensure the sustainability of the family unit. Furthermore, by contributing to household income, women may help secure education, health, and social stability for their children, thereby supporting the preservation of intellect and lineage. Research suggests that women's empowerment and economic participation positively influence family welfare, children's education, and social responsibility, aligning with the holistic objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (Ningrum et al., 2023).

However, despite the potential benefits, women's economic participation within Muslim families remains a contested issue, shaped by religious interpretations, patriarchal norms, and socio-cultural expectations. In many Muslim societies, women who work outside the home may face social stigma, family resistance, and moral scrutiny. These tensions highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of women's economic roles that balances religious principles, cultural contexts, and socio-economic realities. The *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* framework offers a comprehensive and flexible

approach to analyzing these issues, as it emphasizes the underlying purposes of Islamic law rather than rigid textual interpretations.

The concept of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* has gained renewed attention in modern Islamic legal theory as scholars seek to address contemporary challenges such as gender equality, economic development, and social justice. The *Maqāṣid* approach provides a moral and ethical compass for evaluating social and economic practices, ensuring that they align with the overarching goals of justice, welfare, and human dignity. Karimullah (2022) argues that *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* serves as a foundational framework for Islamic economic policies, guiding ethical economic practices and promoting sustainable development. This perspective underscores the relevance of *Maqāṣid* in evaluating women's economic participation within the family.

Women's economic participation also intersects with broader discussions on gender empowerment and social development. Globally, women's labor force participation is recognized as a key driver of economic growth and social progress. Studies have shown that empowering women economically can improve household welfare, enhance children's health and education, and contribute to community development. From an Islamic perspective, these outcomes resonate with the objectives of preserving life, intellect, and wealth, suggesting that women's economic participation can be consistent with Islamic ethical principles. Furthermore, historical precedents in Islamic tradition demonstrate that women have long participated in economic activities, including trade, agriculture, and craftsmanship, indicating that women's work is not inherently incompatible with Islamic values.

Research Method

This research is This study employs a qualitative research design to explore how women's economic participation in supporting their husbands aligns with the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* in meeting family needs. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because the research seeks to understand social, religious, and ethical meanings embedded in women's lived experiences, family dynamics, and Islamic normative interpretations rather than to measure variables quantitatively. By adopting an interpretive paradigm, this research aims to capture the subjective

perceptions of women, husbands, and religious scholars regarding women's work and its implications for family welfare from an Islamic perspective.

The research is conducted in selected Muslim communities where women's participation in economic activities is prevalent and socially significant. The participants consist of married women who contribute economically to their households, their husbands, and key informants such as Islamic scholars, community leaders, and family counselors. Purposive sampling is used to select participants who meet specific criteria, namely married women who actively engage in income-generating activities to support their families. This sampling strategy ensures that the participants have direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation and can provide rich, in-depth information.

Data collection is carried out through in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews allow participants to express their experiences, motivations, challenges, and perceptions regarding women's economic participation and its religious and social implications. Interviews with husbands provide insights into spousal cooperation, gender roles, and perceptions of women's economic contributions. Additionally, interviews with Islamic scholars and community leaders offer normative perspectives on women's work within the framework of Islamic law and *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*. Participant observation is conducted to understand the daily realities of women balancing domestic and economic roles, while document analysis includes reviewing Islamic legal texts, fatwas, policy documents, and scholarly literature relevant to women's work and *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

The data analysis follows a thematic analysis approach, which involves coding and categorizing data to identify recurring patterns, themes, and meanings. The analysis begins with open coding to identify key concepts related to women's economic participation, family welfare, gender roles, and Islamic ethical considerations. These codes are then grouped into broader themes that reflect the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, such as the preservation of wealth, life, intellect, lineage, and religion. Through axial and selective coding, the relationships between themes are examined to develop an interpretive framework that explains how

women's economic participation contributes to achieving the higher objectives of Islamic law.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies are employed. Triangulation is used by combining multiple data sources, including interviews, observations, and documents, to validate the findings. Member checking is conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. Reflexivity is maintained throughout the research process by acknowledging the researcher's positionality and potential biases. Additionally, thick description is provided to enhance the transferability of the findings to similar contexts.

Ethical considerations are addressed by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and respecting cultural and religious sensitivities. Participants are informed about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time. Pseudonyms are used to protect participants' identities, and data are stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

This study integrates Islamic legal theory with social science methodology by using *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as an analytical framework. The *Maqāṣid* framework is employed to interpret empirical findings in light of Islamic ethical objectives, allowing the research to bridge normative Islamic jurisprudence and empirical social realities. By adopting this interdisciplinary approach, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of women's economic participation in supporting their husbands and its implications for family welfare from the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

Results and Discussion

In carrying The findings of this study reveal that women's economic participation in supporting their husbands and families is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by economic necessity, religious understanding, socio-cultural norms, and personal agency. The results indicate that women's work is not merely a response to

financial pressures but also a conscious strategy to achieve family well-being, stability, and resilience. Through the lens of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, women's economic contributions can be understood as an integral component of the broader objectives of Islamic law, particularly in preserving wealth, life, intellect, lineage, and religion.

One of the central findings is that economic necessity is the primary driver of women's participation in income-generating activities. Many participants reported that rising living costs, limited male income, and economic uncertainties compelled them to seek additional sources of income. Women described their work as a form of cooperation (*ta'āwun*) with their husbands rather than a challenge to male authority or responsibility. This finding reflects a pragmatic adaptation of traditional gender roles to contemporary economic realities. From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, such economic cooperation aligns with the objective of preserving wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) and ensuring family sustainability. Women's income was used primarily for basic necessities such as food, housing, education, and healthcare, indicating that their work contributes directly to family welfare and social stability.

Another significant finding is that women's economic participation enhances family welfare beyond financial dimensions. Participants reported that their contributions enabled better educational opportunities for their children, improved healthcare access, and increased social mobility. Women perceived their work as a form of investment in their children's future, which resonates with the objectives of preserving intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*) and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). This suggests that women's work plays a crucial role in intergenerational well-being and human development. The findings also indicate that economic participation strengthened marital relationships in many cases, as husbands expressed appreciation for their wives' contributions and cooperation. However, some participants reported challenges such as increased workload, stress, and role conflict, highlighting the need for equitable division of domestic responsibilities.

Religious understanding emerged as a key factor shaping women's perceptions of their economic roles. Many participants interpreted their work as consistent with Islamic teachings, emphasizing the values of cooperation, mutual support, and social responsibility. Religious scholars and community leaders interviewed in this study

generally affirmed that women's work is permissible in Islam, particularly when it contributes to family welfare and adheres to ethical and moral principles. This normative perspective reflects a purposive interpretation of Islamic law, consistent with the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* framework. The findings indicate that religious narratives emphasizing mutual responsibility and welfare provide moral legitimacy for women's economic participation.

The data also reveal that socio-cultural norms significantly influence women's work experiences and perceptions. In some communities, women's economic participation is socially accepted and even encouraged, while in others, it remains stigmatized. Women who worked outside the home sometimes faced social criticism, highlighting persistent patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes. Nevertheless, many women demonstrated agency by negotiating these norms and redefining their roles within the family and community. This reflects the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity in Muslim societies and underscores the importance of contextualizing Islamic legal interpretations within contemporary social realities.

From an analytical perspective, the findings suggest that women's economic participation can be conceptualized as a form of ethical praxis that embodies the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*. The preservation of wealth is evident in women's contributions to household income and financial security. The preservation of life is supported through improved access to healthcare and nutrition. The preservation of intellect is reflected in investments in education and knowledge development. The preservation of lineage is strengthened through enhanced child-rearing practices and family stability. Finally, the preservation of religion is maintained through women's adherence to Islamic ethical norms while engaging in economic activities. Thus, women's work can be interpreted as a holistic contribution to the realization of Islamic ethical objectives.

The findings also highlight the transformative potential of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as an analytical framework for understanding gender roles in contemporary Muslim societies. Rather than viewing women's work as a deviation from Islamic norms, the *Maqāṣid* perspective emphasizes its alignment with the broader goals of welfare, justice, and dignity. This purposive approach challenges rigid gender binaries and

promotes a more inclusive understanding of Islamic ethics. It also provides a normative foundation for policy and religious discourse that supports women's economic empowerment while preserving Islamic values.

However, the study also identifies challenges and tensions associated with women's economic participation. Many women experienced a double burden of paid work and domestic responsibilities, leading to physical and emotional stress. This finding reflects persistent gender inequalities in household labor distribution and underscores the need for greater spousal cooperation and social support systems. From a *Maqāṣid* perspective, these challenges may undermine the objective of preserving life and dignity, indicating the need for ethical and social reforms to ensure equitable gender relations.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that women's economic participation has implications for Islamic legal discourse and family policy. The purposive interpretation of women's work through *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* provides a framework for rethinking traditional legal assumptions about gender roles and economic responsibilities. It also highlights the importance of contextual *ijtihad* in addressing contemporary socio-economic challenges. By integrating empirical findings with Islamic legal theory, this study contributes to the development of a dynamic and context-sensitive understanding of Islamic family law.

In summary, the results of this study demonstrate that women's economic participation in supporting their husbands and families is a complex phenomenon that reflects economic necessity, religious interpretation, socio-cultural norms, and individual agency. Through the lens of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, women's work can be understood as a meaningful contribution to family welfare and social stability. The findings support the argument that women's economic participation is not only permissible but also aligned with the ethical objectives of Islamic law, provided that it is conducted within a framework of justice, dignity, and mutual cooperation.

The analytical contribution of this study lies in its integration of empirical social research with Islamic legal theory. By applying the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* framework to women's economic participation, the study demonstrates the relevance of purposive

Islamic legal theory in contemporary socio-economic contexts. The findings suggest that *Maqāṣid* can serve as a normative and analytical tool for evaluating gender roles, family economics, and social policies in Muslim societies.

This study also contributes to gender and Islamic studies by providing empirical evidence of women's agency and resilience in navigating economic and religious constraints. It challenges simplistic dichotomies between tradition and modernity by showing how women reinterpret Islamic norms in light of contemporary realities. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that integrate theology, sociology, and economics in understanding complex social phenomena.

Conclusion

Based on This study concludes that women's economic participation in supporting their husbands to meet family needs represents a significant and contextually grounded phenomenon that reflects both socio-economic realities and Islamic ethical principles. The findings demonstrate that women's work is primarily driven by economic necessity, family welfare considerations, and a sense of mutual responsibility within marriage. Rather than challenging traditional Islamic norms, women's contributions are largely perceived by participants as a form of cooperation and solidarity that strengthens the family unit.

From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, women's economic participation aligns with the higher objectives of Islamic law, particularly the preservation of wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). Women's income contributes directly to household financial stability, access to education and healthcare, and the overall well-being of family members, thereby supporting intergenerational development and social resilience. Furthermore, women's engagement in economic activities does not inherently contradict the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), as many participants maintained religious practices and ethical values while working.

The study also reveals that religious understanding and socio-cultural norms play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of women's work. Participants and religious scholars generally viewed women's economic participation as permissible and even commendable when it serves family welfare and adheres to Islamic ethical guidelines. This purposive interpretation of Islamic law underscores the relevance of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as a flexible and context-sensitive framework for addressing contemporary gender and economic issues in Muslim societies.

However, the findings also highlight persistent challenges, particularly the double burden experienced by women who balance paid work with domestic responsibilities. This indicates ongoing gender inequalities in household labor distribution and underscores the need for greater spousal cooperation, social support systems, and policy interventions that promote gender equity while respecting Islamic values. From a *Maqāṣid* perspective, ensuring justice, dignity, and well-being for women is essential to achieving the holistic objectives of Islamic law.

Overall, this study contributes to the interdisciplinary discourse on gender, family economics, and Islamic legal theory by demonstrating that women's economic participation can be understood as an ethical practice that fulfills the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*. The integration of empirical findings with Islamic normative theory provides a nuanced understanding of women's roles in contemporary Muslim families and offers a theoretical foundation for future research, policy formulation, and religious interpretation.

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