



**EQUALITA: JURNAL STUDI GENDER DAN ANAK**

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## **The Current Hadith Interpretation on Wife's Obedience among Muslim Conservatives and Progressives on Online Media**

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**ABSTRACT:** Conservative and progressive Muslim groups differ in their interpretation of the hadith on a wife's obedience to her husband, which reinforces female subordination and seeks to establish a just gender relation within the family. The data for this qualitative research is drawn from an online Islamic-based media website, confirmed through interviews with three scholars related to their understanding of the research subject. The research findings show three forms of interpretation of the hadith on female obedience. Firstly, absolute obedience is a form of husband's domination over his wife based on a literal textual interpretation of the famous hadith among conservative Muslims. Secondly, conditional obedience responds to the husband's responsibility towards his wife. Thirdly, obedience is based on Tauheed, Muasyarah Bil Ma'ruf, and Mubadala, with a contextual reciprocal understanding popular among progressive Muslims. This article encapsulates that reinterpreting the hadiths on the wife's obedience and other misogynistic hadiths is crucial to establish a harmonious Sakinah Mawaddah wa Rahmah family.

**Keywords:**

Wife's obedience, hadith interpretation, conservative Muslim, progressive Muslim, online media

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Conservative and progressive Muslims understand the hadiths on a wife's obedience to her husband differently. These interpretations not only reproduce gender inequality but also construct gender justice within the family. For some Muslims, adherence to the husband is associated with being a pious wife (a good wife) and is believed to be the gateway to heaven (Eidhamar, 2018). Conversely, disobedience by a wife is not only threatened with hell but also becomes a cause of violence against women due to biased gender interpretations. Hamka claims that subjective gender interpretations are caused by the solid patriarchal ideology within Muslim society (Hasan et al., 2022). However, Muslim feminists criticize the androcentric and patriarchal dimensions within the texts (Shaikh, 2004a) and interpret them following principles of justice and equality (Mir-Hosseini, 2006). A wife's obedience to her husband can be understood through reciprocal interpretation, considering the mutuality between husband and

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wife (Kodir, 2016). Thus, the hadiths on a wife's obedience to her husband are part of misogynistic hadiths understood differently by Muslim groups and impact gender relations, family life, and women.

Scholars have extensively researched the study of hadith and gender, which can be divided into three categories. Firstly, the issues of gender equality within hadith texts (Hassan, 2017), such as gender equality in hadith within madrasa curricula (Arifin, 2021) and the Prophet as an exemplar of a good husband (Ali, 2014). Secondly, the interpretation of misogynistic hadiths regarding female imams (Najwah et al., 2022). The understanding of gender bias in hadiths is caused by patriarchal culture (Damanhuri, 2018; Hasan et al., 2022). Thirdly, living hadith studies on women's lives were influenced by the method of understanding the Prophet's hadiths. Muslims construct their social identity based on their understanding of the Prophet's hadiths (Lücking & Eliyanah, 2017) within Muslim societies' social and cultural context (Ahmed, 2005). The above studies are descriptive, and critical analytical thinking regarding the interpretation of hadiths on gender and women's issues is still limited.

This paper addresses the shortcomings of previous studies, which have overlooked the diversity of Islamic text interpretations. Specifically, this article discusses the controversy surrounding the understanding of the hadith on a wife's obedience to her husband in online media. Accordingly, this research has three objectives. Firstly, to highlight the differences in the interpretation of the hadith on a wife's obedience to her husband in online media; second, to map out the forms and patterns of hadith interpretation from various Muslim communities in digital media; thirdly, to analyze the impact of different interpretations on women's lives in Muslim communities. These three objectives serve as a foundation for understanding the diversity of Muslim interpretations in the digital era.

This writing argues that the diversity of interpretations among Muslims is based on differences in ideology, knowledge, gender, and social background within two significant narratives: conservative and progressive. These differences not only demonstrate the diversity of hadith interpretations and debates within Muslim communities regarding gender and women's issues but also reflect the latest trends in contemporary Indonesian Islamic discourse on gender relations within the family. These debates impact family life and women, as they face discrimination in a strongly patriarchal Muslim culture. They also provide a space for equality, thereby creating a harmonious family following the spirit of Islam.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Hadith Interpretation, gender, and patriarchal ideology**

Hadiths, the second source of Islamic teachings, embody the Prophet's words and actions. It serves as a guide for Muslims in their worship and their daily lives. Muslims interpret and practice hadith in various ways, and their interpretations play a crucial role in shaping their understanding of religious concepts. Muslims understand hadith in two forms: textual and contextual (Naqiyah et al., 2022). Textual understanding is a literal interpretation, while contextual understanding considers the socio-historical context of early Islam and social, cultural, economic, political, and scientific developments (Saeed, 2006).

The study of gender has revealed that misogynistic hadiths are a source of gender injustice. The pervasive patriarchal ideology within Muslim communities has resulted in gender disparities that stem from the texts themselves and their interpretations (Ahmad et al., 2004; Hasan et al., 2022), which affect the beliefs, thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors of Muslims. Belief in patriarchal ideology has resulted in violence against women (Zaatut & Haj-Yahia, 2016), reflecting the imbalanced power dynamics between men and women in families and society (Ammar, 2007). In other words, the reproduction of gender inequality within religious texts has led to various forms of discrimination against women in Muslim families. For instance, women are subjected to violence from their partners (Gennari et al., 2017), dowry serves as a cause of various forms of violence against women in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2018), and women bear a more significant burden of work compared to men (Fetterolf & Rudman, 2014). On the other hand, husbands are believed to serve as the gateway to heaven for women (Eidhamar, 2018). Gender construction is shaped by various factors, including sex, spirituality, self-perception, roles, behavior, occupation, clothing, sexuality, governmental and religious ideology, and subjectivity (Graham, 2004).

### **B. Religious Narratives of Conservative and Progressive Groups**

The Muslim religious narrative is generally divided into conservatism and progressivism. Conservatism is a spiritual phenomenon that reflects obedience to religious norms, with a tendency to maintain the values of faith and sharia (Chaider S. Bamualim, Hilman Latief, 2018), strictly adhering to the holy scriptures or teachings, orthodoxy, and traditions that are considered the most accurate, while rejecting modernity. The development of scripturalism in religious understanding has also contributed to the strengthening of

conservatism. Scripturalism is an understanding that considers literal interpretations of scriptural evidence as the primary source for understanding and practicing religious life (Abubakar, 2018). Studies by Bamualim and Abu Bakar have shown that conservative religious beliefs among Indonesian millennial youth are related to religious tolerance (Chaider S. Bamualim, Hilman Latief, 2018). Currently, Indonesian Muslims are facing the increasing influence of conservative Muslim groups known as the Conservative Turn, coined by Martin van Bruinessen, especially in the religious narrative on social media (Windy Triana, 2021). This phenomenon is caused by cultural hybridization, Islamic identity strengthening, scripturalism (Chaider S. Bamualim, Hilman Latief, 2018), and the fragmentation of religious authority on social media (Windy Triana, 2021).

On the other hand, the progressive group understands religion through contextual interpretation, which attempts to capture the meaning of scriptural texts according to the context in which the verse was revealed or the hadith emerged and extracts general principles to be applied in a new and changing context. Because of the spatial and temporal differences in reading, understanding, and practicing the hadiths, reinterpretation is necessary to meet the Muslim community's current context. Muslim feminists have reinterpreted gender-biased religious texts through feminist hermeneutics (Barazangi, 2021; Mir-Hosseini, 2006; Shaikh, 2004b). Through this approach, Islamic feminists criticize texts with androcentric and patriarchal dimensions, emphasizing equality and justice to demonstrate gender fairness (Shaikh, 2004a). In the Indonesian context, the Congress of Indonesian Women Ulama (KUPI) offers a common understanding of Quranic verses and hadiths related to gender and women's issues (ROHMANYAH et al., 2022).

### **3. METHODS**

This qualitative study utilizes data from online Islamic preaching media in Indonesia, supplemented by interviews with three Islamic scholars. The press was purposively sampled using a Google search with the keyword "obedience to the husband." After the appearance of the keyword, the author mapped the article titles and selected ten websites that represented conservative and progressive Muslim groups. The determination of the two groups was identified from the article titles and the language used. It was considered conservative if the language used was normative, textual-literal, and supported a patriarchal ideology that subordinates women. Conversely, if the language used was critical-analytical, questioning

hadith texts, and attempted to reinterpret and reread hadiths that support gender equality and justice, then it was categorized as progressive. The ten selected websites were as the followings:

<https://muslim.or.id> ; <https://almanhaj.or.id> ; <https://alhikmah.ac.id> ; <https://www.islampos.com> <https://konsultasisyariah.com> ; <https://rahma.id> ; <https://ibtimes.id> ; <https://mubadalah.id> ; <https://bincangmuslimah.com> ; <https://thr.kompasiana.com> ;

This qualitative research adopts the methodology Naqiyah et al. (2022) employed in their study on Muslim understanding of COVID-19 through online media as a data source. The research was conducted over four months, from December 2022 to March 2023. The mapping of the interpretation diversity of hadith on the obedience of wives to their husbands was carried out through a thematic analysis to obtain an understanding from both conservative and progressive Muslim groups. Meanwhile, the impact of these interpretations on families and women was obtained from online media news that discussed the violence suffered by women because of disobedience to their husbands or examples of harmonious families based on the principle of mutual respect between spouses.

The data obtained through online media were then mapped and classified thematically to confirm the debate between conservative and progressive Muslims regarding the hadith on the obedience of wives. Data analysis was conducted in two forms. First, data processing followed Huberman's (2000) stages, beginning with data reduction from online media, followed by the data display in the summary and synopsis form based on the research findings' themes and data verification for the conclusion process. Second, data analysis used content analysis, starting with the restatement of the data found in online media, followed by description to identify patterns or tendencies in the data, and concluding with interpretation to reveal the meaning of the data collected.

## 4. RESULTS

### A. The debate on interpreting a wife's obedience in online Preaching media.

Research indicates that the interpretation of wives' obedience to their husbands differs among conservative and progressive groups. Three types of understanding regarding wives' obedience have been identified: absolute obedience, conditional obedience, and obedience based on the principles of equality based on tauhid, Mu'asyarah bil Ma'ruf, and Mubadalah, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Interpretation Differences

Categories	Cited Interpretations	Sources
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<b>Absolute obedience (Husband is the guarantee of paradise for his wife)</b>	If a believing woman passes away and fulfills her obligations towards her husband until he is pleased with her, she is guaranteed entry into paradise	(Tuasikal, 2022) <a href="https://muslim.or.id/23592-istri-yang-taat-suami-dijamin-surga.html">https://muslim.or.id/23592-istri-yang-taat-suami-dijamin-surga.html</a>
<b>Absolute obedience (where a husband is considered both the gateway to paradise and hell for his wife)</b>	This hadith depicts the command of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to pay attention to the husband's rights that his wife must fulfill because the husband is both heaven and hell for his wife. If the wife is obedient to her husband, then she will enter heaven, but if she neglects her husband's rights and disobeys him, it can lead to the wife falling into the abyss of hell.	(Jawas & :, 2022) <a href="https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html">https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html</a>
<b>Absolute Obedience</b>	It is easy for a woman to be in heaven if she obeys her husband	An interview with IF, Imam of a mosque, on 25 February 2023
<b>Conditional Obedience (Compliance is limited to what is good)</b>	However, obedience to one's husband has its limits. Such obedience must not involve disobedience to Allah or actions that may cause harm.	(Y. Purnama, 2023) <a href="https://konsultasisyariah.com/41264-apakah-taat-pada-suami-dalam-segala-hal.html">https://konsultasisyariah.com/41264-apakah-taat-pada-suami-dalam-segala-hal.html</a>
<b>Conditional Obedience</b>	Women are only obliged to obey their husbands in reasonable and lawful matters. For example, the wife must fulfill the request if they are asked to make coffee.	An interview with AME, an Islamic scholar, on 13 February 2023
Conditional obedience (the husband should only be obeyed if he fulfills his obligations towards his wife)	As a husband, he needs to manifest his rights. Firstly, the husband must treat his wife with kindness. Secondly, providing for her needs is also part of his responsibility.	(Natsir, 2020) <a href="https://rahma.id/yang-wajib-diketahui-istri-sebelum-taat-kepada-suami/">https://rahma.id/yang-wajib-diketahui-istri-sebelum-taat-kepada-suami/</a>
<b>Obedience based on tauhid (absolute obedience is only for Allah)</b>	The reduced meaning of obedience potentially leads to the deviation of obedience's definition solely to Allah to obey humans. Moreover, suppose this obedience causes the wife to fear her husband and becomes a way for the husband to justify domestic violence in the name of obedience. In that case, it is not in line with Islamic teachings. If a Muslim obeys anyone other than Allah, they can be labeled as engaging in shirk, which means associating partners with Allah or engaging in acts of polytheism.	(Muthmainnah, 2020) <a href="https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/">https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/</a>
Obedience based on the principle of reciprocity (husband and wife mutually obey each other)	A wife who obediently did not visit her sick father until his death is a tale of a woman's obedience to her husband. This obedience can only be accepted if it is related to the goodness of the household, which strengthens their relationship. This obedience must also be reciprocal by referring to the five pillars of the family. It includes maintaining marriage as a strong bond (Mitsaqan Ghalizan), behaving as partners to each other (Zawaj), treating each other kindly (Mu'asyarah bil Ma'ruf), consulting with each other (Tasyawurin), and being content with each other (Taradhin). It means that a woman needs to obey her husband just as a man needs to obey his wife.	(Kodir, 2020) <a href="https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/">https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/</a>

obedience based on mutual consultation for goodness	A wife's obedience to her husband is based on the principle of mu'asyarah bil ma'ruf. The husband must treat his wife well. The wife will reciprocate the excellent treatment of a husband towards his wife with the same kindness.	An interview with A, a Female religious leader, on 25 February 2023
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## B. Factors causing differences in the interpretation of Hadiths.

Research indicates that five factors cause differences in the interpretation of hadith related to a wife's obedience. Firstly, there are differences in the evidence used to legitimize female subordination. Secondly, differences in the method of interpreting hadith, both textual and contextual, can lead to varying interpretations. Thirdly, differences in reference sources can also contribute to differences in interpretation. Fourthly, differences in gender and ideology can play a role. Finally, differing understandings of family and gender can also impact interpretations. These factors are outlined in the following table:

Table 2: Factors causing differences in the interpretation of hadith about wife's obedience.

Arguments	Descriptions	Sources
<b>Differences in the basis of the argument</b>	<i>"Any woman who dies and her husband is pleased with her will enter paradise." (HR. Tirmidzi)</i> <i>"If a person consistently performs the five daily prayers, fasts during the month of Ramadan, avoid adultery, and obeys their spouse, then they shall enter paradise through any gate they please." (HR. Ahmad)</i>	(Tuasikal, 2022) <a href="https://muslim.or.id/20258-tatkala-istri-tidak-taat-suami.htm">https://muslim.or.id/20258-tatkala-istri-tidak-taat-suami.htm</a>
<b>Differences in the basis of the argument</b>	<i>"Men as leaders of the family" (QS. An-Nisa: 34)</i> <i>"If I were to command anyone to prostrate before someone other than Allah, I would have ordered wives to prostrate before their husbands." (HR Tirmidzi)</i>	(Y. Purnama, 2023) <a href="https://konsultasisyariah.com/41264-apakah-taat-pada-suami-dalam-segala-hal.html/">https://konsultasisyariah.com/41264-apakah-taat-pada-suami-dalam-segala-hal.html/</a>
<b>Differences in the basis of the argument</b>	Men have advantages compared to women (QS. Al-Baqarah: 228) <i>"If a husband invites his wife to bed and she refuses, then the wife will be cursed by the angels until dawn." (HR. Bukhari)</i>	(Jawas & :, 2022) <a href="https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html">https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html</a>
<b>Differences in the basis of the argument</b>	<i>"Regarding the hadith that states a woman must obey her husband even if her parents are sick, it contradicts other verses in the Quran and hadith that instruct children to be kind to their parents." (QS. An-Nisa, 4: 36; al-An'am, 6: 151; al-Isra', 17: 23; dan al-Ahqaf, 46: 15).</i> Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that he heard the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) say: "The obligations of one Muslim to another are five: to respond to his greeting of salaam, to visit him when he is sick, to attend his funeral	(Kodir, 2020) <a href="https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/">https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/</a>

	when he dies, to accept his invitation, and to bless him when he sneezes.". (HR. Bukhari).	
<b>Differences in the basis of the argument</b>	Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, "The most perfect of believers in faith are those with the best character, and the best of you are those who are best to their women." (HR. al-Tirmidzi)	(Aulia, 2022) <a href="https://bincangmuslimah.com/kajian/benarkah-perintah-taat-hanya-berlaku-bagi-istri-38536/">https://bincangmuslimah.com/kajian/benarkah-perintah-taat-hanya-berlaku-bagi-istri-38536/</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations (textual)</b>	The wife must obey her husband in matters such as sexual relations, leaving the house requires the husband's permission, and traveling with the husband.	(Tuasikal, 2022) <a href="https://muslim.or.id/20258-tatkala-istri-tidak-taat-suami.htm">https://muslim.or.id/20258-tatkala-istri-tidak-taat-suami.htm</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations (textual)</b>	Wives must fulfill their husband's rights based on the hadith of the Prophet: to engage in sexual relations, to be commanded to pray to fast, to give alms, to wear Muslim clothing, and to attend gatherings of knowledge.	Jawas & :, 2022) <a href="https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html">https://almanhaj.or.id/2080-hak-suami-yang-harus-dipenuhi-isteri.html</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations (textual)</b>	She is willing to avoid something if her husband forbids it. She is open-minded when her husband advises her. She is keen not to receive male guests - even distant relatives - when her husband is away or outside the house.	(admin, 2013) <a href="https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/">https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations (textual)</b>	It is not permissible for a wife to be obedient to her husband. The attitude of a wife's obedience to her husband borders on shirk al-Taqrīb or Syirik at-Taqlid, which is worshiping (obeying, submitting) to someone other than Allah SWT, including her husband.  The relationship between husband and wife should be based on the purpose of marriage to create a harmonious family (QS. ar-Ruum [30]:21); husband and wife are like clothing for each other (QS. al-Baqarah[2]:187); they should treat their spouse reasonably (QS an-Nisaa[4]:19). marriage is a firm covenant (mitsaqan ghalidzan) based on mutual consent.	(Muthmainnah, 2020) <a href="https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/">https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations (textual)</b>	<b>The story about Prophet prohibiting a woman from visiting her sick parents due to her husband's disapproval is weak and should be disregarded as a basis for Islamic teachings. It is inappropriate to require a woman to obey her husband and neglect her duty to serve her parents.</b>  The hadith that suggests a wife's obedience to her husband is more important than her parents cannot be found in credible hadith collections. This hadith is only mentioned in al-Ghazali's book with a weak sanad (narration chain).	(Kodir, 2020) <a href="https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/">https://mubadalah.id/kisah-istri-taat-suami-tidak-kunjungi-ayah-yang-sakit/</a>
<b>Differences in interpretations</b>	The duty of being devoted to the husband ends with divorce, while the responsibility of being dedicated to parents has no end. It is because there is such a thing as an "ex-husband," but there is no such thing as "ex-parents." A child is still obligated to be	(U. Y. Purnama, 2023) <a href="https://muslimah.or.id/14467-memang-hak-suami-lebih-besar-dari-orang-tua-tapi.html">https://muslimah.or.id/14467-memang-hak-suami-lebih-besar-dari-orang-tua-tapi.html</a>

	devoted to their parents even after they pass away.	
<b>Differences in interpretation (Anti-feminism)</b>	Currently, many individuals are elated with the slogan of gender equality and feminism. These isms or doctrines are merely solutions for Western society to extricate themselves from the current crisis of injustice besieging them and are not intended for Muslim women.	(admin, 2013) <a href="https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/">https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/</a>
<b>The difference in understanding about a harmonious family (where a wife's obedience leads to a peaceful and harmonious family).</b>	The wife must always obey her husband in beneficial matters to create a sense of security and affection in the family so that the boat of their life can sail smoothly and far from the waves that make it sway so strongly. A wife's obedience will affect the longevity and harmony of a family relationship.	(admin, 2013) <a href="https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/">https://alhikmah.ac.id/taat-suami-salah-satu-kunci-surga-istri/</a>  (Setiani, 2021) <a href="https://www.islampos.com/3-jenis-ketaatan-istri-terhadap-suaminya-237693/">https://www.islampos.com/3-jenis-ketaatan-istri-terhadap-suaminya-237693/</a>
<b>The ideology of a group</b>	The ideology of a group influences the understanding of both male and female writers.	(Setiani, 2021) <a href="https://www.islampos.com/3-jenis-ketaatan-istri-terhadap-suaminya-237693/">https://www.islampos.com/3-jenis-ketaatan-istri-terhadap-suaminya-237693/</a>
<b>Gender</b>	Women are brave enough to express religious views that differ from the mainstream.	(Muthmainnah, 2020) <a href="https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/">https://ibtimes.id/taat-hanya-kepada-allah-bukan-suami/</a>
<b>Differences in References</b>	Their references can influence the writer's understanding. For instance, referring to gender-biased books may legitimize women's subordination. For example, in the book Uqud al-Lujain on household ethics by Sheikh Muhammad bin Umar An-Nawawi, it is stated that one of the major sins of a wife is to leave the house without her husband's permission, regardless of the reason, even if it is to offer condolences to her deceased parents.	(Handayani, 2021) <a href="https://thr.kompasiana.com/langitmiyu/608fe57b8ede485a8c276de2/sebuah-kisah-ketaatan-istri-di-masa-nabi-muhammad-saw?page=all">https://thr.kompasiana.com/langitmiyu/608fe57b8ede485a8c276de2/sebuah-kisah-ketaatan-istri-di-masa-nabi-muhammad-saw?page=all</a>
<b>Differences in References</b>	Quoting from a book by a Muslim feminist, Kiai Faqihuddin Abdul Qodir, in his book "Qira'ah Mubadalah," he argues that the term obedience is often emphasized by many parties, is only directed towards women, and is based on various verses and Hadiths. Religious texts should be interpreted reciprocally (mubadalah) by placing both husband and wife as subjects with full responsibilities in the family.	(Aulia, 2022) <a href="https://bincangmuslimah.com/kajian/be-narkah-perintah-taat-hanya-berlaku-bagi-istri-38536/">https://bincangmuslimah.com/kajian/be-narkah-perintah-taat-hanya-berlaku-bagi-istri-38536/</a>

### C. The impact of interpreting a wife's obedience to her husband on relationships within a household.

The interpretation of a wife's obedience to her husband not only impacts the incidence of violence against women but also affects the harmony within the household. Forms of

violence against women can manifest as physical, psychological, sexual, symbolic, and economic violence. Conversely, the principle of mutual respect between husband and wife can foster harmony within the household.

Table 2: Factors causing differences in the interpretation of hadith about wife's obedience.

Responses	Implications	Resources
<b>Physical violence</b>	The husband abuses his wife because she does not give him money for transportation to visit his second wife.	<a href="https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2023/02/28/tega-minta-uang-untuk-pulang-ke-rumah-istri-kedua-pria-asal-nagan-raya-kdrt-istri-pertama">https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2023/02/28/tega-minta-uang-untuk-pulang-ke-rumah-istri-kedua-pria-asal-nagan-raya-kdrt-istri-pertama</a>
<b>Physical violence</b>	A husband perpetrated domestic violence against his wife due to her non-compliance with his directive to sell a cat.	<a href="https://www.pmjnews.com/article/detail/52211/kdrt-dan-bacok-istri-karena-cekcok-hingga-luka-berat-polisi-bekuk-pelaku">https://www.pmjnews.com/article/detail/52211/kdrt-dan-bacok-istri-karena-cekcok-hingga-luka-berat-polisi-bekuk-pelaku</a>
<b>Psychological violence</b>	The husband becomes emotional when the wife refuses to engage in sexual intercourse	<a href="https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1680281/kasus-kdrt-venna-melinda-penyidik-polda-jawa-timur-tahan-ferry-irawan">https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1680281/kasus-kdrt-venna-melinda-penyidik-polda-jawa-timur-tahan-ferry-irawan</a>
<b>Psychological violence</b>	The husband treats his wife roughly	<a href="https://www.idntimes.com/hype/entertainment/ika-larasati-1/artis-yang-alami-kdrt-c1c2">https://www.idntimes.com/hype/entertainment/ika-larasati-1/artis-yang-alami-kdrt-c1c2</a>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	The wife is subjected to sexual violence by her husband	<a href="https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/5176522/ferry-irawan-dicap-emosional-bila-keinginan-di-ranjang-tak-dituruti-venna-melinda-bisa-ngamuk-dia">https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/5176522/ferry-irawan-dicap-emosional-bila-keinginan-di-ranjang-tak-dituruti-venna-melinda-bisa-ngamuk-dia</a>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	Husband commits violence after being refused sexual intercourse by his wife	<a href="https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/5214177/pengacara-sarah-ungkap-dugaan-penyimpangan-seks-rizal-djibran-sudah-disediakan-pintu-untuk-keluar-masuk-kenapa-harus-lewat-jendela#">https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/5214177/pengacara-sarah-ungkap-dugaan-penyimpangan-seks-rizal-djibran-sudah-disediakan-pintu-untuk-keluar-masuk-kenapa-harus-lewat-jendela#</a>
<b>Symbolic violence (threat)</b>	Husband threatens to distribute wife's pornographic video	<a href="https://www.suara.com/lifestyle/2023/02/16/101500/jadi-korban-kdrt-hingga-video-telanjang-diancam-disebarkan-venna-melinda-kini-jalani-hipnoterapi-apa-manfaatnya">https://www.suara.com/lifestyle/2023/02/16/101500/jadi-korban-kdrt-hingga-video-telanjang-diancam-disebarkan-venna-melinda-kini-jalani-hipnoterapi-apa-manfaatnya</a>
<b>Symbolic violence (threat)</b>	The domestic violence perpetrator threatened his wife not to report the case	<a href="https://www.detik.com/sumut/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-6484254/kerap-diancam-wanita-korban-kdrt-honorerdishub-palembang-baru-berani-melapor">https://www.detik.com/sumut/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-6484254/kerap-diancam-wanita-korban-kdrt-honorerdishub-palembang-baru-berani-melapor</a>
<b>Economic Neglect</b>	Wife files for divorce due to lack of financial support from husband.	<a href="https://news.detik.com/berita/d-6436359/suami-tidak-beri-nafkah-bisakah-saya-gugat-dan-pidanakan">https://news.detik.com/berita/d-6436359/suami-tidak-beri-nafkah-bisakah-saya-gugat-dan-pidanakan</a>
<b>Economic Neglect</b>	Wife is not financially supported	<a href="https://lifestyle.sindonews.com/read/998221/187/5-bantahan-ferry-irawan-soal-kdrt-venna-melinda-tak-lakukan-kekerasan-hingga-berikan-nafkah-1673946110">https://lifestyle.sindonews.com/read/998221/187/5-bantahan-ferry-irawan-soal-kdrt-venna-melinda-tak-lakukan-kekerasan-hingga-berikan-nafkah-1673946110</a>
<b>Harmony in the household</b>	Harmony between a husband and wife at the 27th year of their marriage is attributed to their mutual agreement and understanding, which have fostered positive interaction and cohesiveness in their relationship	<a href="https://www.kompas.com/hype/read/2022/02/21/162541066/rahasia-keharmonisan-rumah-tangga-inul-daratista-dan-adam-suseno">https://www.kompas.com/hype/read/2022/02/21/162541066/rahasia-keharmonisan-rumah-tangga-inul-daratista-dan-adam-suseno</a>

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<b>Harmony in the household</b>	Harmonious households are attributed to effective communication.	<a href="http://entertainment.kompas.com/read/2017/09/14/192148010/ini-kunci-keharmonisan-rumah-tangga-dian-nitami-dan-anjasmara?_ga=2.80470679.1847530770.1677920178-564880704.1659239648">http://entertainment.kompas.com/read/2017/09/14/192148010/ini-kunci-keharmonisan-rumah-tangga-dian-nitami-dan-anjasmara?_ga=2.80470679.1847530770.1677920178-564880704.1659239648</a>
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## 5. DISCUSSION

This paper demonstrates the controversy surrounding the understanding of hadiths on the obedience of wives to their husbands among Muslims, particularly within the conservative and progressive Muslim communities. Based on textual analysis, there are three types of understandings regarding the obedience of wives: absolute obedience, conditional obedience, and obedience based on the principles of monotheism, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and mutual consultation. The differences in perspectives are caused by multifactorial factors, including differences in the evidence used to justify the obedience of wives to their husbands and the method of textual or contextual interpretation. In addition, the understanding of family and gender, different references, group ideologies, and biological sex also influence the understanding of hadiths. As a result, there is a gender gap and domestic violence on the one hand, and fair gender understandings contribute to marital harmony on the other. In other words, the interpretation of wives' obedience toward their husbands highly determines the household's condition.

Table 1 presents three discussions on the forms of a wife's obedience to her husband: absolute obedience, conditional obedience, and obedience based on the principles of tauhid, Muasyarah bil Ma'ruf, and Mubadalah. These differences in interpretation are inseparable from the differences in the selection of hadith or Quranic verses and the interpreter's background. Conservative groups use Islamic texts to legitimize women's subordination. They even claim that husbands will determine wives' entrance to either heaven or hell. Thus, women are considered to have no choice in life, as everything depends on men. Eidhamar's research shows that domestic violence tends to be accepted by victims because it is legitimized by the belief that the husband is the gateway to the wife's heaven (Eidhamar, 2018). This narrative is often based on fear and coercion followed by threats and intimidation, such as the curse of angels and God. Therefore, conservative groups reproduce gender inequality based on an unjust gender understanding of religious texts.

The group that understands the obedience of wives to their husbands with certain conditions is divided into two—first, the requirements of obedience from the husband. The husband's orders should only be followed if they relate to good things. Second, obedience from the wife is only mandatory if the husband has fulfilled his responsibility to do good and provide for the family, as mentioned in QS. Annisa: 19 and 34. Conditional obedience is a sign of gratitude and reward for the husband's kindness towards his wife. However, in the context of conditional obedience, the wife's disobedience can be considered as *Nusyuz*, a rebellion against the husband's orders (QS. An-Nisa: 34), as the husband has the authority to discipline the wife (Is et al., 2014; Windy Triana, 2021), making the wife vulnerable to various forms of violence. On the other hand, obedience based on the principles of *tauhid*, *Mu'asyarah bil Ma'ruf*, and *Mubadalah*, is based on the principles of mutual respect, openness, willingness, and appreciation for the partner (QS Al-Hujurat:13 and QS Al-Baqarah:187), thus establishing a fair and balanced gender relation in the family.

The differences in understanding a wife's obedience to her husband can be divided into two categories: textual and contextual, as presented in Table 2. Differences do not only influence textual and contextual interpretations in textual interpretation but also indicate religious groups. Textual interpretation is a literal method of understanding the text, typically used by conservative groups. The wife's obedience is closely related to holy commandments, which claim that husband is a leader and the determiner of their wife's entry to heaven and hell. This interpretation is gender-biased, subordinating women as second-class citizens (Simone de Beauvoir) and legitimizing domestic violence. Gender-biased interpretations, particularly patriarchal thinking, significantly impact Quranic interpretation (Hasan et al., 2022). On the other hand, the Quran states that every man and woman will receive their reward according to their actions (QS Ali Imran:195). In other words, the husband as the determiner of his wife's entry into heaven or hell is not in line with the spirit of the Quran, which assigns personal responsibility for good and bad actions to both men and women in this world.

On the other hand, contextual understanding is an understanding that considers the historical context related to the socio-historical background of early Islam in the 7th century CE and the current socio-cultural context in which the hadiths are understood today (Saeed, 2016). In understanding the hadith of a wife's obedience to her husband, progressive Muslims prioritize a fair gender understanding to achieve gender equality within the family. For example, sexual needs are not just the needs of men but also the needs of women (Swara Rahima, 2020).

Although hitting a wife is allowed, Prophet Muhammad never resorted to violence against his wives. "Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) never hit anything with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant." (Hr. Muslim)

From a Muslim feminist perspective, the Prophet's treatment of his wives should serve as an example for Muslim men. Men should exercise patience to refrain from striking their wives rather than teaching wives to accept being hit by their husbands. Patience in marriage should be taught as the patience to control one's anger and refrain from violence against one's partner (Adistia, 2022), based on the hadith of the Prophet, "Do not harm yourself or others." (HR. Ibnu Majah). This shows that a comprehensive, thematic, and reciprocal reading and understanding of religious texts aligns with Islamic values of *rahmatan lil alamin*, which respects men and women equally and fairly.

Differences in references, ideologies, and group interests lead to varying interpretations of hadith. For example, a writer may refer to two books: *Kitab Uqud al-Lujjayn* and *Qiraah Mubadalah*. *Kitab Uqud al-Lujjayn* by Imam Nawawi al-Bantani discusses the relationship between husband and wife and has been criticized by Indonesian Muslim feminists for not referring to authoritative texts and mostly quoting weak hadith, making it unsuitable as a reference or guidance for Muslims (Kajian Kitab Kuning, 2000). On the other hand, the book *Qiraah Mubadalah*, written by Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir, one of the Indonesian Muslim feminists who support gender equality, serves as an alternative reference. An individual's references are strongly influenced by their ideology and group interests, which affects the writer's knowledge, understanding, and insights.

Divergent assumptions about harmonious families constitute one of the causes of varied understandings of hadith. Conservative circles, who refer to textual interpretations of hadith, consider a wife's obedience to her husband as a source of family happiness, as mentioned in hadith texts. The *Jabbariyyah* doctrine influences the religious attitudes of conservative Muslims, who believe that Allah has predetermined human life, including joy and misery. They think that the truth of texts is the truth of reality in everyday life. In marital relationships, happiness and harmony are determined by a wife's obedience to her husband, as stated in the hadith text. In contrast, progressive Muslims believe that marriage happiness should be achieved through mutual attitudes of respect, kindness, consultation, and consent. In other words, harmony in the family is determined by good attitudes towards one's partner, whether male or female.

One exciting aspect is the role of women in managing Islamic proselytization media and their involvement in expressing their religious beliefs through online media. It highlights women's agency and signifies a shift in religious authority in the digital realm that male scholars have dominated. Muslim women use digital media to express, practice, and negotiate their understanding and religious affiliations to build emancipatory and submissive agency and subjectivity (Midden & Ponzanesi, 2013). The presence of women's voices in the online environment reflects the diverse, segmented, and fragmented Islamic public space (Nisa, 2019). For Muslims, online activities are seen as part of striving for righteousness to enhance their religiosity (Slama, 2018). Meanwhile, for Muslim women, discussions about gender roles, marriage, and career shape the concept of piety based on monotheism (Tauheed) (Piela, 2011), despite facing resistance from Islamist groups (Al-Rawi, 2014).

The differences in understanding of hadith texts are closely tied to the interests of the interpreters (Naqiyah, 2022). As most scholars are men, their interpretations may exhibit a male bias. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage female scholars to interpret religious texts. Additionally, promoting the participation of Muslim feminists and women in online and social media can spread values of humanity, equality, justice, and tolerance. The Congress of Indonesian Women Scholars (KUPI) has tried to transform the authority of religious leadership in Indonesia (RASYIDAH, n.d.). Media outlets run by Muslim women and feminists, such as Rahma.id and Mubadalah, advocate for the agency and subjectivity of Muslim women.

These differences in interpretation affect attitudes towards family and women, as stated in Table 3. On the one hand, the differences in understanding methods impact the occurrence of various domestic violence due to the subordination of wives. On the other hand, it shows the event of harmony in families based on the principle of mutualism. The National Commission on Violence Against Women recorded 6,555 cases of domestic violence in 2020, with 100 cases of marital rape, a decrease compared to the previous year's 192 patients (Perempuan & Tahunan, 2020). The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA) recorded 25,050 women as victims of violence in Indonesia throughout 2022. This number increased by 15.2% from the previous year, with 21,753 cases. Looking at the location, 58.1% of violence against women occurred within the household (Rizaty, 2022). It indicates that women dare to report domestic violence cases, including sexual coercion within marriage, to the authorities.

On the other hand, family harmony is shown by couples who apply gender equality values from an egalitarian perspective. These husbands provide equal opportunities for their wives to

participate in public spaces and are utilized for mutual welfare. The husbands never engage in violence toward their wives (Wade & Wiloso, 2016). In Islam, such a family is called a *Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah* family, which is harmonious and full of affection based on mutualism (QS. Arrum: 21).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The understanding of the hadith on wives' obedience to their husbands varies among Muslim communities, particularly conservative and progressive Muslims, which impacts women and family harmony. Conservative Muslims understand wives' obedience to their husbands as absolute based on a literal textual understanding of the hadith. Obedience is seen as a prerequisite for women to enter heaven. This interpretation often leads to domestic violence because of the threat from the husband, hellfire, and the angels' curse. Some interpret obedience as conditional, regarded as a reward for the husband's responsibility towards the family. It includes providing for the family and being kind to his wife and children. In contrast, progressive groups understand obedience based on *tauhid*, *Muasyarah bil Ma'ruf*, and *Mubadalah* based on mutual respect and egalitarianism between spouses, resulting in a harmonious and non-violent family. The diversity of understanding regarding wives' obedience indicates an opportunity to address domestic violence cases with a humanistic and gender-just religious approach.

The debate between conservative and progressive groups regarding the hadith of a wife's obedience reveals two essential aspects. Firstly, the interpretation of a wife's obedience is diverse, indicating that the interpretation of Islamic texts is dynamic, open, and subjective, which anyone can interpret. The interpretation model shows differences in knowledge, experience, interests, and religious affiliation. Secondly, there is room for rereading and reinterpreting the hadith related to the wife's obedience with a new inclusive, gender-fair approach, considering the context of time and place, such as *Mubadalah*, as a contribution to the resolution of various problems in Muslim families. A dynamic interpretation of misogynistic hadith about the obedience of wives to husbands is a reason for Muslim women to either accept or reject such obedience.

This research is limited to several online media sources, hence the need for expanding more varied data sources, including various religious groups, to provide a more comprehensive

picture of the dynamics of interpretation and its contribution to resolving problems in Muslim families.

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