

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF WIVES' FULFILLMENT OF FAMILY SUPPORT: A REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF SYAFI'I AND HAMBALI

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Abstract

This study examines the economic implications of wives' fulfillment of family support, analyzed through the perspectives of the Syafi'i and Hambali Islamic legal schools. The purpose is to understand how these jurisprudential views influence family economic dynamics and the role of wives in sustaining family welfare. The study employs a qualitative literature review methodology, analyzing classical and contemporary fiqh texts and scholarly interpretations related to women's financial contributions within the household. The findings indicate that both the Syafi'i and Hambali schools provide nuanced frameworks recognizing wives' involvement in family economic matters while emphasizing responsibilities aligned with social and religious norms. This review highlights the importance of integrating religious jurisprudence with socio-economic realities to foster family sustainability.

Keywords: Family Support, Wives' Economic Role, Syafi'i School, Hambali School, Islamic Jurisprudence, Family Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

The family is recognized as the smallest social unit that holds a vital role in fostering social and spiritual resilience. Within Islamic teachings, the equilibrium of roles between husband and wife is considered fundamental in the construction of a harmonious household. Both partners share moral and material responsibilities in upholding the household (Al-Musawi, n.d.). Should either spouse neglect these responsibilities, the household environment risks descending into emotional disarray and disharmony, ultimately leading to potential divorce.

In Islam, the rights and obligations between husband and wife are clearly outlined. Each party is required to understand and fulfill their respective duties. As emphasized in classical jurisprudence, the provision of financial maintenance (*nafaqah*) by the husband is not only expected but obligatory (Al-Musawi, n.d.). This obligation is grounded in the Qur'anic verse from Surah Al-Baqarah 2:228:

“And women have rights similar to those over them according to what is equitable, but men have a degree [of responsibility] over them. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise” (Qur'an 2:228, as cited in Al-Qur'an al-Karim).

This verse reflects the foundational structure of marital reciprocity in Islam. The mutual rights and duties of spouses are extensively discussed in the classical Fiqh literature, especially within the chapter on marriage. According to Sabiq (n.d.), as cited in *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, these rights and obligations are generally classified into three types: joint rights, the rights of the wife over the husband (which correspond to the husband's obligations), and the rights of the husband over the wife (which correspond to the wife's obligations).

A particularly significant area of family responsibility is economic sustenance. The obligation to provide for the family is, in principle, borne by the husband. This normative framework is supported by the consensus of scholars across the four major Sunni schools of thought, including the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools (Ibn Qudamah, n.d.; Al-Nawawi, n.d.).

However, evolving socio-economic realities have challenged this traditional structure. In many contemporary contexts, women — including wives — not only participate in the workforce but also assume the role of primary breadwinners, often by mutual agreement or out of financial necessity. This shift prompts pressing legal inquiries: What is

the status of a wife who financially provides for her household in the eyes of Islamic jurisprudence? Is she religiously obligated to do so? What legal implications arise concerning her rights within the marriage?

From the perspective of the Shafi'i school, the responsibility of *nafaqah* remains solely on the husband, provided the wife remains within the bounds of obedience and a valid marital contract (Al-Nawawi, n.d.). Conversely, the Hanbali school offers a more flexible interpretation. It recognizes that under specific conditions — particularly when there is mutual consent and no compulsion — a wife's contribution to the family's livelihood may be legally acceptable and ethically commendable (Ibn Qudamah, n.d.). This divergence between the two schools invites a comparative analysis, providing valuable insight into the legal and ethical dimensions of modern Muslim family dynamics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Family sustainability in Islam is regarded as a vital aspect of maintaining a harmonious, ethical, and spiritually balanced society. The family unit serves as the foundational institution for instilling moral values, religious principles, and social responsibility. Islamic scholars emphasize that a stable family contributes significantly to the strength and resilience of the wider community.

Within this framework, the role of the wife is seen as essential in maintaining the emotional, educational, and often financial stability of the household. Islamic teachings highlight her responsibility in nurturing children, supporting her husband, and fostering a peaceful domestic environment. Her influence extends beyond physical care to include emotional intelligence and spiritual guidance, which are critical to a family's long-term well-being.

The Syafi'i school of thought provides a structured understanding of the wife's responsibilities, focusing primarily on her duties within the home. According to classical Syafi'i jurisprudence, a wife is not legally obliged to contribute financially to the household, as this is the husband's primary duty. Her main obligations include obedience in lawful matters, maintaining her chastity, and managing the domestic space in a manner consistent

with Islamic ethics. While voluntary contributions, including financial support or outside employment, are appreciated, they are not mandated.

The Hambali school shares many similarities with the Syafi'i perspective but offers slightly more flexibility regarding a wife's involvement in external affairs. Hambali jurists, such as Ibn Qudamah, acknowledge that while the wife's primary role is to safeguard the home and honor the marital relationship, her participation in earning a livelihood is permissible if it does not interfere with her foundational duties. The Hambali view thus allows for a more adaptive approach to the evolving roles of women in modern societies.

Contemporary scholarship further explores the dynamic role of wives, particularly in dual-income households where women contribute to both economic and caregiving responsibilities. Studies in Islamic family sociology highlight that the modern Muslim wife often balances professional obligations with her spiritual and domestic roles. Research shows that when properly managed, the wife's contribution outside the home can enhance family resilience and financial stability without compromising Islamic values.

Several empirical and theoretical studies have addressed the impact of the wife's role in sustaining the family. These works suggest that while traditional fiqh perspectives continue to shape expectations, the changing socio-economic landscape has led to broader interpretations and applications. Scholars today are re-examining classical jurisprudence to harmonize it with contemporary realities, ensuring that family roles remain both faithful to Islamic principles and responsive to modern challenges.

In conclusion, the perspectives of the Syafi'i and Hambali schools underscore the central role of wives in achieving family sustainability through obedience, emotional support, and domestic responsibility. However, both schools also allow for contextual adaptation, acknowledging the potential for wives to contribute in diverse ways to the welfare of the family. This balance between tradition and practicality forms the basis for a dynamic understanding of women's roles in sustaining the Muslim family.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a *normative legal research* approach. Normative legal research involves doctrinal analysis of legal sources, including statutes, legal doctrines, and scholarly

opinions. In this context, the researcher examines the views of scholars from the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools of thought, supplemented with contemporary scholarly opinions. These are analyzed using supporting evidence drawn from the Qur'an and Hadith.

In terms of its nature, this research is descriptive-analytical and also comparative. The descriptive aspect involves explaining and interpreting variables from both past and present legal discourses. Meanwhile, the comparative element focuses on analyzing the influence of the wife's economic contribution to household needs and its implications for her right to maintenance (*nafaqah*) from the perspective of Shafi'i and Hanbali jurisprudence.

The study employs a *qualitative approach* in analyzing the data. Qualitative research, as defined by Sukmadinata (2011), aims to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of individuals or groups. In this research, the legal reasoning and interpretative frameworks of classical Islamic jurisprudence are qualitatively examined.

This study is categorized as *library research (library-based study)*, which means all data and information are obtained from textual sources available in libraries or digital archives. The primary objective is to gather relevant doctrinal and scholarly sources that inform the topic under investigation.

The researcher utilizes both **primary** and **secondary** data sources: 1) **Primary sources** include classical jurisprudential texts such as *Al-Umm* and *Ar-Risalah* by Imam al-Shafi'i, *Al-Majmu' Syarh al-Muhadzdzab* and *Minhaj al-Thalibin* by Imam al-Nawawi, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* by Ibn Rushd, and *Al-Fiqh 'Ala al-Mazahib al-Arba'ah* by Shaykh Abdurrahman al-Jaziri, along with other recognized works on comparative fiqh; 2) **Secondary sources** comprise scholarly literature such as academic journals, relevant books, and articles that provide contemporary insights and contextual analysis related to the topic.

Data collection is carried out through document review, where the researcher carefully examines and analyzes the contents of both primary and secondary sources to obtain relevant legal arguments and scholarly perspectives.

The collected data is analyzed using *content analysis* techniques. Content analysis refers to the systematic and objective interpretation of textual content to derive legal meaning, patterns, and doctrinal reasoning. Additionally, a *comparative analysis method* is

applied to identify the convergences and divergences between the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools regarding the legal implications of a wife's financial contribution to the household.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fulfillment of Family Support by the Wife According to the Shafi'i School of Thought

Islamic jurisprudence generally agrees that the obligation to provide for the family lies primarily with the husband. In the Shafi'i school of thought, this responsibility is emphasized and supported by textual evidence from the Qur'an, notably QS. An-Nisa (4): 34, which asserts that men are the protectors and maintainers of women due to the financial responsibility they undertake. Imam al-Shafi'i, in *al-Umm*, affirms that a wife who has submitted herself to her husband in accordance with sharia is entitled to full maintenance, regardless of whether she is poor or wealthy, and she holds no obligation to support the household financially.

The Shafi'i school considers a wife's contribution to household finances as *tathawwu'* (voluntary goodwill), not a legal obligation. As stated in *Hasyiyah al-Bajuri*, such contributions are commendable but not mandatory. Therefore, women are permitted to work and earn income, but this does not shift the legal burden of financial provision from the husband.

Furthermore, the Shafi'i school firmly upholds the wife's proprietary rights. If a wife earns an income from her employment or business, the wealth remains solely hers and cannot be appropriated by the husband without her consent. Imam al-Nawawi in *al-Majmu'* underscores that the wife's property is inviolable unless she willingly grants permission for its use.

Scholars of the Shafi'i school also recognize conditional permissibility regarding a wife's employment. She may work outside the home with her husband's permission, provided the work does not involve *fitnah* (moral corruption), violate sharia principles, or interfere with her domestic responsibilities. Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, in *Tuhfah al-Muhtaj*, stresses that a wife is not permitted to leave the house without her husband's permission except in cases of necessity.

Imam al-Nawawi further explains:

“ولا يلزمها كسب ولا خدمة في بيت الزوج، فإن فعلت ذلك فهو تبرع منها”

“The wife is not required to earn a living or serve in her husband’s household; if she does so, it is a voluntary act.”

Wahbah az-Zuhaili, in *al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, adds that while a wife may assist economically with mutual consent, such contributions must not compromise her primary obligations. He emphasizes that family cooperation (*ta’awun*) should guide household dynamics, rather than legal compulsion.

In essence, the Shafi’i school maintains a clear stance: the husband bears the financial responsibility for the family, and while the wife may contribute economically, this does not alter the legal obligations defined in the marital contract.

Fulfillment of Family Support by the Wife According to the Hanbali School of Thought

The Hanbali school similarly holds that providing financial support is the husband’s exclusive obligation. This is based on verses from the Qur’an (e.g., QS. At-Talaq: 7 and QS. An-Nisa: 34) and hadiths that mandate the husband to support his wife in a manner consistent with *ma’ruf* (socially accepted norms). Ibn Qudamah in *al-Mughni* states that if the marriage contract is valid and the wife fulfills the condition of obedience (*tamkin*), the husband must cover her financial needs, regardless of her personal wealth or income.

In *Kashf al-Qina’*, al-Bahuti clarifies:

“وَلَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهَا الخِدْمَةُ فِي بَيْتِهِ وَلَا التَّكْسِبُ”

“The wife is not obligated to serve in her husband’s home or to earn income.”

The Hanbali school acknowledges the wife’s right to her own property and income. Any wealth she earns, whether from inheritance, business, or employment, is solely hers. The husband cannot compel her to finance the household using her own resources. Ibn Qudamah emphasizes in *al-Mughni* that even if the wife works, her right to maintenance remains valid unless she explicitly waives it.

Working outside the home is permitted for wives under certain conditions: with the husband’s consent, without violating sharia, and without neglecting household

responsibilities. *al-Insaf* by al-Mardawi explains that the husband may prohibit his wife from working if it compromises family welfare or dignity.

Ibn Qudamah articulates the central principle:

"النفقة تجب للزوجة على زوجها وإن كانت غنية، ولا يلزمها الكسب"

"The husband must provide maintenance to his wife, even if she is wealthy, and she is not obliged to earn an income."

This demonstrates the Hanbali school's firm stance: financial responsibility rests with the husband, and the wife's role in earning income is voluntary and not legally binding.

Legal Consequences According to the Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools

1. Doctrinal Comparison

Aspect	Shafi'i School	Hanbali School
Primary condition for maintenance	Fulfillment of <i>tamkin</i> (obedience); maintenance remains due even if the wife works	Maintenance is contingent upon <i>perfect tamkin</i> and husband's permission for employment
Wife's right to work	Permissible with husband's consent; does not negate maintenance	Permissible but may constitute <i>nusyuz</i> if without consent
Wife's income	Fully owned by the wife; husband may not demand it	Same; husband cannot compel wife to spend her income
Legal maxim	"النَّفَقَةُ مُقَابِلُ التَّمَكِينِ" – Maintenance is in return for <i>tamkin</i>	"لا نفقة مع النشوز" – No maintenance in case of disobedience

2. Role Reversal and Legal Implications

Situation	Shafi'i View	Hanbali View
Wife works with husband's consent	Husband is still obliged to provide maintenance	Husband remains responsible if <i>tamkin</i> is intact
Wife works without husband's permission	Considered <i>nusyuz</i> , maintenance is forfeited	Maintenance is revoked due to disobedience
Husband unable to provide, wife supports family	Maintenance right persists legally; deferred but claimable	Maintenance may be waived temporarily, but remains obligatory if demanded
Wife supports family voluntarily	Maintenance not automatically forfeited unless waived	Same; if wife later demands, husband must compensate

Situation	Shafi'i View	Hanbali View
Retrospective demand for maintenance	Allowed if no waiver occurred	Disputed; depends on presence of mutual agreement or custom
Wife is disobedient (<i>nusyuz</i>)	Right to maintenance is terminated	Maintenance is lost even with minor disobedience
Wife works but remains obedient	Maintenance remains obligatory	Same, with condition of husband's consent

3. Contemporary Relevance

Modern economic circumstances often require dual income sources. In such contexts:

- The **Shafi'i view** is more accommodating, allowing women to work without loss of maintenance rights if they fulfill *tamkin*.
- The **Hanbali view** remains stricter, interpreting unauthorized work as *nusyuz*, yet recognizes contemporary dynamics when permission is granted.

Contemporary Synthesis by Modern Scholars

Modern scholars such as Wahbah az-Zuhaili and Yusuf al-Qaradawi have offered reconciliatory views. They assert:

“المرأة التي تعمل بإذن زوجها لا تعتبر ناشزاً، وحقها في النفقة ثابت، لأنها لم تخل بشرط التمكين”

“A woman who works with her husband's permission is not considered disobedient, and her right to maintenance remains intact, as she has not breached the condition of *tamkin*.”

They invoke the legal maxim:

“المعروف عرفاً كالمشروط شرطاً”

“That which is commonly accepted by custom is regarded as if it were an express condition.”

This approach allows for greater legal flexibility in modern settings where wives contribute economically as a norm. Therefore, a wife's employment — when conducted with consent and in harmony with her household duties — does not nullify her right to maintenance.

CONCLUSION

Based on an in-depth study of the thoughts of two major schools of thought, namely the Shafi'i School and the Hambali School, regarding the obligation of a wife's maintenance

in the context of a wife who works or exchanges roles with her husband, it is understood that both schools of thought have different fiqh frameworks but both are based on strong sharia evidence. Both emphasize the importance of the role of tamkin and obedience as the basis for husband and wife relations.

The Shafi'i School generally views that maintenance is an absolute obligation of a husband towards a wife who has fulfilled tamkin. The wife still has the right to maintenance, even if she works or has her own income, as long as there is no nusyuz. This view is based on the fiqh principle "النفقة مقابل التمكين" and shows justice in maintaining the rights of wives in various social conditions.

In contrast, the Hanbali school holds a more conservative view, whereby maintenance is only obligatory if the wife fully obeys her husband and does not leave the house without permission. If the wife works without her husband's permission, then she is considered nusyuz and loses her right to maintenance. This is based on the principle of "لا نفقة مع النشوز" and is explained in books such as al-Mughni by Ibn Qudamah.

This difference reflects the difference in understanding the maqashid sharia and the social context of each school of thought in the classical era. The Shafi'i school tends to be more textual but provides contextual space for the wife's work, while the Hambali school emphasizes attachment to the traditional household structure.

In contemporary reality, when the wife participates in the family economy and sometimes becomes the backbone, the Shafi'i school's approach becomes more relevant and can answer the challenges of the times. This is due to its flexibility towards the wife's participation in the public sphere as long as it does not ignore the role of the household and still has the husband's permission.

Contemporary approaches put forward by scholars such as Wahbah az-Zuhaili and Yusuf al-Qaradawi show a meeting point between these two classical approaches. By emphasizing the importance of agreement between husband and wife, and considering social conditions, they assert that the wife's work that is approved by the husband does not invalidate the right to maintenance.

The contemporary fiqh principle "المعروف عرفاً كالمشروط شرطاً" also reinforces that social customs that have become mutual agreements can be the basis for determining the

legal status of maintenance. This provides legitimacy to a more collaborative and participatory modern family model.

Therefore, this study concludes that in the context of today's society, the views of the Syafi'i School are more compatible with the developing reality. However, the principles of the Hambali School still have value in maintaining the stability of roles in households that still uphold classical structures.

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