

The Dynamics of Single Parent Family Resilience: An Islamic Family Law Approach and Sociological Analysis

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Abstract: The primary issue addressed in this study is the impact of the lean season, which significantly reduces rice field yields. The study aims to explore the strategies employed by single-parent families in Nagari Pagaryung who work as farmers to maintain family resilience, along with the supporting and hindering factors in this effort. The research utilizes a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method. Data collection is conducted through interviews and documentation, supported by source triangulation, which involves asking the same questions to multiple informants. The findings reveal that single parents in Nagari Pagaryung adopt various strategies to sustain family resilience, including diversifying their jobs, with farming being one of them. During the lean season, they undertake additional measures such as seeking alternative income sources, utilizing savings, and borrowing money from relatives. The driving factors for these families include affection for their children and intrinsic motivation within the family. On the other hand, the inhibiting factors include economic challenges and the difficulty of balancing time between work and children.

Keywords: Single Parent, Resilience, Islamic Law Family

Introduction

In Islamic law, we often encounter the terms *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (affection), and *rahmah* (compassion), which collectively signify a peaceful life that encompasses every family and household. Tranquility and peace are among the primary goals of married life. The feeling of *sakinah* refers to a sense of comfort and serenity shared by a husband and wife, who live in obedience to Allah SWT with dedication and mutual respect. A tranquil atmosphere (*sakinah*) fosters mutual affection and love (*mawaddah*) (Putri et al., 2024). This sense of love between spouses nurtures beauty and mutual respect, ultimately leading to happiness within the household. In the scope of Islamic legal studies, there is also the study of *muamalah*, which relates to Islamic family law known as *al-ahwal al-syakhsiyyah* (Dewi & Nurwanti, 2024). *Al-ahwal al-syakhsiyyah* refers to legal relationships that arise among individuals within a family, beginning with marriage and ending with its dissolution, whether due to death or divorce. The scope of *al-ahwal al-syakhsiyyah* is broad and includes matters such as marriage, guardianship, endowment (*waqf*), wills, inheritance, gifts (*hibah*), financial support (*nafkah*), and child custody (*hadhanah*) (Arifiani, 2021).

The family is the smallest social unit within society and serves as the initial environment for children's learning and activities (Taylor & Leung, 2020). A father or husband, mother or wife, and children form a family group. Within family life, fathers and mothers have distinct roles as parents. The unity of both parents in a family is crucial in supporting the growth and development of a child. A child's trust in their parents is an essential factor that fosters proper growth and development (Yasa & Fatmawati, 2021). When there is a gap or absence of a parent in the family, efforts must be made to psychologically compensate for the lack of a father or mother so their presence is still felt. If interpersonal conflicts arise within the family, it is important to manage the quality and intensity of these conflicts to ensure they are

resolved effectively. A family that performs its functions well is a key prerequisite for the sustainability of a society. This is because families nurture new generations, instilling norms and values aligned with societal expectations (Wahyuni, 2010).

Disintegration within a family often occurs when its members fail to fulfill their agreed-upon responsibilities, leading to suboptimal roles within the family and, ultimately, divorce (Wilson-Evered & Zeleznikow, 2021). Divorce or the death of a spouse is a primary factor causing disintegration within a family, giving rise to a new social group; single parents. This shift brings about changes in behavior and necessitates special attention in raising children (Haryanti et al., 2014). When faced with the need to support their children, either the father or mother takes on the role of a single parent, becoming both the caregiver and the breadwinner. This requires them to independently manage all family responsibilities without the assistance of a partner. The bond of marriage between husband and wife is inherently fragile and can be severed, resulting in separation, divorce, or death (Usman et al., 2024). Consequently, many couples opt to live separately, believing it to be the better choice.

Fulfilling the dual responsibilities of caregiving and providing for the family is undoubtedly challenging for single parents. They must balance childcare and work to meet the family's financial needs. Becoming a single parent is never a deliberate choice; it is often the result of circumstances, such as divorce or the death of a spouse (Layliyah, 2014). Public perceptions of single parents in Indonesia are often critical and unaccepting. Many people struggle to accept the reality that some individuals, whether men or women, must raise children without the presence of a spouse. Gossip, ridicule, and discrimination are frequently directed at single parents. Key factors disrupting the balance within a family are divorce and death, both of which lead to the emergence of single-parent families. Single parents face the dual responsibility of providing for their family, instilling moral guidance, and supporting their children's growth and development. These responsibilities are crucial for single parents to meet their family's needs and maintain its stability (Wahyuni, 2010).

Previous studies on family resilience have explored various aspects, such as the research conducted by Yolashania Anggita Putriherna on the dynamics of single-parent family resilience. Her study emphasized the importance of communication, cooperation, close relationships with children, understanding and respecting others, and maintaining discipline. However, obstacles such as economic challenges and children's mental health issues post-divorce negatively impact family life (Putriherna, 2022). Similarly, research by Andre Deo Pratama highlighted the difficulties of single mothers fulfilling dual roles as caregivers and heads of households. These women face significant hurdles in their daily lives, including economic challenges, difficulties in socializing within the community, and struggles in raising their children (Pratama, 2017). Additionally, Yesi Handayani examined family resilience among early marriage couples in Desa Lubuk Tapi, Kecamatan Ulu Manna, Kabupaten Bengkulu Selatan (Handayani, 2021), while Tri Dyah Rastiti focused on the role of single fathers in fulfilling family functions in impoverished communities in Kelurahan Nusukan, Kecamatan Banjarsari, Kota Surakarta (Rastiti, 2019).

Despite the wealth of research on family resilience, no studies have specifically addressed the strategies employed by single-parent families working as farmers to maintain family resilience, particularly in relation to their economic background. Thus, this study is essential to examine the strategies of single-parent families in Nagari Pagaruyung, who work as farmers, in sustaining family resilience, along with the driving and inhibiting factors influencing their efforts.

Literature Review

Single Parent Strategies in Maintaining Family Resilience

Single-parent families consist of two or more individuals, including at least one child, either male or female, living together under natural and emotional rules (Aslantürk & Mavili, 2020). This family structure can result from various factors that prevent a child from growing up in a complete household. It is often challenging for single-parent families to manage responsibilities and maintain

discipline both at home and outside. However, this does not mean they can overlook essential aspects. Instead, single parents must carefully balance their time effectively between work and family. Achieving family resilience requires strategies or approaches that every family member must understand and implement (Mzid et al., 2019). While strategies may differ among individuals, the ultimate goal is to ensure family resilience and maintain proper family functioning. For single parents, balancing responsibilities inside and outside the home is no easy task, requiring careful time management to avoid prioritizing one aspect over another. This aligns with Sinaga's theory of basic needs, which defines food and clothing as essential for survival and daily activity (Parluhutan Sinaga & Sitorus, 2023). Food refers to necessities like meals and beverages, while clothing encompasses basic items such as apparel, shoes, sandals, bags, and accessories. Thus, when these basic needs are adequately fulfilled, the resilience of the family increases.

Method

This study employs a qualitative method, where data is analyzed narratively based on information obtained from research subjects and processed using specific techniques. The data is then analyzed and evaluated through qualitative data analysis, producing conclusions or findings that address the research questions. This qualitative study utilizes a phenomenological approach, which aims to explore and provide a detailed, in-depth, and personal understanding of the challenges faced by individuals. The research is conducted in Nagari Pagaruyung, chosen for its accessibility and because it is home to several single parents who work as farmers to support their families, often resulting in limited time spent with their children. Data collection techniques include interviews and documentation. The data analysis is carried out in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Source triangulation is employed to test the credibility of the data by cross-checking information obtained from multiple sources. For instance, to verify the credibility of data regarding the strategies of single-parent families in maintaining family resilience, data collection and validation are conducted with single-parent families in Nagari Pagaruyung, Kecamatan Tanjung Emas.

Results and Discussion

Single Parent Family Strategies In Maintaining Family Resilience In Pagaruyung Nagari

In the context of family resilience, the economic condition plays a critical role in daily life. A family's income—whether high or low—directly impacts the well-being of its members. Families with low incomes often face difficulties in meeting basic needs, such as providing education for children, and must prioritize essential needs over others. According to interviews conducted with single parents in Nagari Pagaruyung, strategies for ensuring family resilience, particularly in meeting basic needs such as food and clothing, often involve multiple jobs, including farming. While this work provides some level of satisfaction, it is sometimes insufficient to fully meet their families' needs.

Single parents in Nagari Pagaruyung employ various strategies to meet their family's needs during economic downturns, such as borrowing money from relatives and practicing financial prudence. They carefully balance income and expenditures by prioritizing essential needs and minimizing non-essential spending. The need to sustain their households independently requires resilience and self-reliance, as single parents must work diligently to provide for their families, especially given their responsibilities to meet their children's educational and daily needs. The cost of living for single parents is inevitably high, and they must live within their means to navigate financial challenges. Securing stable employment is crucial for single parents in Nagari Pagaruyung, as it provides the primary means to fulfill their basic needs. Many adopt strategies to enhance their work performance and maintain effective communication with colleagues, ensuring their economic activities remain viable. Borrowing money is often a last resort, but for some, it becomes necessary to address pressing family expenses, even though it adds financial strain due to limited income. In

addition to managing finances, single parents must also prioritize their children's education, viewing it as a critical investment despite the financial challenges. For many, daily survival focuses on fulfilling immediate necessities, with little room for long-term savings. This reality highlights the ongoing struggle of single-parent households to achieve stability while striving to provide a better future for their children.

Factors Supporting and Hindering Single-Parent Families in Maintaining Family Resilience

In Nagari Pagaruyung, single parents rely on farming as their primary source of income to meet their family's financial needs. With the availability of rice fields that can be harvested annually, farming serves as a vital means to support the family's economy and fulfill children's educational requirements. When farming activities succeed in covering household needs, they contribute not only to family stability but also to the educational achievements of children, who often perform better academically in a supportive family environment. Family resilience, which reflects a family's ability to live harmoniously and prosper both physically and mentally, becomes a crucial aspect of single-parent households. Achieving resilience demands awareness and problem-solving skills from every family member to address challenges effectively, as decisions made in the present shape future outcomes.

However, maintaining family resilience is not an easy task for single parents (Hanson et al., 2019). They frequently face difficulties in balancing their dual roles as caregivers and income earners, necessitating support from external parties, such as extended family or community members, to assist with childcare. While stable income from farming, community support, intrinsic motivation, and children's achievements act as supporting factors, challenges like time constraints, economic limitations, lack of support systems, and emotional strain often hinder single parents' efforts. Effective strategies, strong motivation, and access to resources are crucial to overcoming these barriers and ensuring the sustainability of family resilience in single-parent households.

The Dynamics of Single Parent Family Resilience: An Islamic Family Law Approach and Sociological Analysis

Maintaining a household requires preserving the integrity of the family and instilling religious values to strengthen family bonds and prevent conflicts that may disrupt harmony (Nastangin & Huda, 2022). In Islamic law, the obligation of providing financial support (nafkah) rests upon the husband, as it is his duty to provide material sustenance for his wife, and neglecting this responsibility can lead to legal consequences and sin in the eyes of Allah SWT (Pita et al., 2022). Family resilience can be achieved through the fulfillment of several key aspects, including value independence, where Islamic principles serve as a shield against negative influences and guide family members toward righteousness. Economic independence is also crucial, as parents, particularly fathers, are obligated to provide lawful sustenance to ensure the well-being of their families. Social righteousness emphasizes behavior rooted in Islamic social values, such as empathy, respect, and a strong sense of community. Resilience in facing conflict is essential, as differences and disagreements are a natural part of social interaction, requiring thoughtful management to maintain family harmony. Furthermore, problem-solving skills are vital, as families must confront challenges with courage and faith, believing that after hardship comes ease. By upholding these principles, Muslim families can create a strong foundation for resilience and harmony.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the primary strategy employed by single parents in Nagari Pagaruyung to achieve family resilience is working as farmers to meet their families' clothing and food needs. However, during periods of economic downturn or scarcity, they resort to alternative measures such as seeking additional income, using savings, or borrowing money from

relatives. The challenges faced by single parents in maintaining family resilience include economic decline after divorce and difficulties in balancing time with their children due to work commitments. On the other hand, factors that support them in maintaining family resilience are their deep affection for their children and motivation, both intrinsic and derived from family support.

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