

The Role of Women in Maintaining Family Income in Islamic Economy and *Mubādalāh* Review

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Abstract

One of the motivations for women to work in the public sector is to increase family income. Usually, the husband's income is insufficient to meet family needs, so some women work in this sector. This study aimed to describe the Islamic views and conditions of working women in the *Kita Muslim* Fashion Convection, Way Serdang District, Mesuji Regency, Lampung Province, in helping to increase family income. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data sources consist of primary data from interviews and secondary data from research-supporting documents. At the same time, the data analysis model uses interaction analysis. The results of this study are that Islam positions women as equal to men, where they also have rights and responsibilities within the family. Husband and wife can complement each other's tasks in the family. Women can replace or share the burden of meeting family needs with their partners. This phenomenon is similar to the women workers at the *Kita Muslim* Fashion Convection, Way Serdang District, Mesuji Regency, Lampung Province, who contribute to helping the family economy so that household needs can be fulfilled.

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INTRODUCTION

The role of women is still subordinated (Zavaleta Cheek & Corbett, 2024). They have always been the aggrieved parties of the asymmetric relations between women and men, where they continue to experience domestication, negative stereotypes, oppression, violence, alienation, and marginalization in social life (Fernandes & Leite, 2016). It is noted in almost all sectors, both political, economic, social, and cultural sectors, that women tend only to be used as *konco wingking* 'person responsible for doing household chores' who are never considered equal to men (Varma et al., 2001).

Even in human history, the gap in the roles between women and men in social life has always been constructed. From the ancient society of the hunting era to the modern era today, superior male masculinity continues to take over the role of women in domestic and public spaces (Abidin, 2022). This phenomenon is also exacerbated by the existence of religious doctrines that are not enough to provide space for women to develop and place their position on par with men. In Europe itself, as a nation that experienced the earliest modernity, there was also a degradation of the status and role of women during public life (Kemenkeu, 2022). Women are labelled as weak, inferior, short-sighted and cannot make the right and decisive decisions like men (Ismiati, 2018).

The emergence of various oppressions experienced by women in various countries led to women's resistance through the massive movement of feminism. The feminist movement is a feminist struggle to uphold justice (equal rights) and fight against patriarchal culture (Nuryati, 2015). As a result, women are now starting to dare to voice their rights in public spaces, appear as

leaders, and contribute to encouraging the economic welfare of their families (Affiah, Neng Dara. et., 2014).

Moreover, the impact of COVID-19, which triggered a wave of layoffs of workers, especially men – as heads of families (husbands) –, finally required women (wives) to be involved in trying to meet their household needs by working in the public sector (Carney et al., 2023). So, the domestication that is usually attached to them is now shifting with the efforts of wives to work to help the family economy. It was recorded in the BPS report that Indonesia's female labour force participation rate was 83.83 percent, and male labour force participation was 56.43 percent (BPS Indonesia, 2022). This data confirms that the role of women in the world of work is now quite significant.

In addition to women choosing to work to provide for their families, they also have other reasons, such as wanting to fill their spare time, pursue careers and seek more work experience (Kurniawati & Salsabila, 2021). The reason is that women who are only at home and do not participate in helping their family's economy tend to experience much violence. From the Komnas Perempuan report, it was recorded that throughout 2022, there were 457,895 reports of violence against women, of which one of the most crucial causes was family economic problems. The unstable economic situation of the family eventually triggers stress, depression, and uncontrolled emotions from the husband (Akbar, 2017). As a result, wives and children are used as objects of vent and acts of violence (Muhajarah, 2017).

The portrait of women's lives in Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji regency, reflects how the role of a wife works to improve the family's economy. They are not only stagnant in fulfilling their obligations in taking care of the household but also moved to contribute to helping their husbands meet their daily needs by working in the public sector. One field of work they occupy is working at the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*. Wasini founded the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection Company* on July 17, 2017 (Wasini, 2023). This Convection is a company that produces formal, semi-formal and Muslim women clothing in Way Serdang. As the convention's efforts grew, many local women were recruited as workers. So, women in Way Serdang can get additional income to meet the needs of their families.

The emergence of the times and social dynamics have indirectly given women the freedom to be active in the public sphere. The role of a wife in the family has shifted quite significantly. Suppose in the past they were only responsible for domestic areas; now, they are in the modern era. In that case, a few also work outside the home to earn additional income for their families, which is not enough if they only rely on income from their husbands' work (Wahid & Lancia, 2018). However, in the Islamic view, only men must provide for their families. This phenomenon has been confirmed in the Quran Surah An-Nisā verse 34.

Men (husbands) are responsible for women (wives) because Allah has favoured some of them (men) over others (women) and because they (men) have spent part of their property. Righteous women are those who obey (to Allah) and take care of themselves when (their husbands) are not around because Allah has taken care of (them) (Al-Qur'an, 2019).

The verse explains that women are not burdened (obligated) to earn a living for their families because the livelihood is the man's responsibility as the head of the family. Although in the social context, women are now starting to enter the public sphere to work and help find additional income for the family. Of course, this is not forbidden in Islam, considering Islam provides justice and equality for all humanity (Bahri S, 2015). The Al-Quran Surah al Hujurat verse 13 emphasizes this equality between men and women. In a broader sense, they are equal and complementary partners in various social, economic, educational and political activities (Rahmawaty, 2015).

However, there are consequences that women must accept when they choose to enter the public sphere. They will experience a double burden because they must work on their responsibilities in the domestic realm as housewives and the public realm as career women (Firdaus

et al., 2020)(Sudarto, 2021). Thus, with the rolling of these problems, researchers conducted this study to explain in depth the views of Islamic economics about women working in the public sphere and the condition of working women in *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, Way Serdang district, Mesuji regency, Lampung province in helping to increase family income.

This research also wants to deepen and look for novelties from previous research. In previous research conducted by Siscawati et al. entitled *Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in The National Development of Indonesia*, the role of women in the economy has been described (Siscawati et al., 2020). Of course, this is in line with research conducted by current researchers who discuss the contribution of women in the economy. However, in this study, authors want to be more specific about the contribution of women in supporting the family economy of Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji Regency. Then, research conducted by Larasati and Ayu entitled *The Education for Gender Equality and Human Rights in Indonesia: Contemporary Issues and Controversial Problems* also focuses on discussing the issue of gender inequality and the role of women in the public sector (Larasati & Ayu, 2020). Compared to previous research, the novelty of this study is to focus more on exploring the contribution of women in Way Serdang sub-district in supporting the family economy seen from an Islamic economic perspective and *Mubādalāh* review.

There is also research by Meliala et al. entitled *Gender Analysis of Women Farmers (Case Study of Corn Farmers in Tigabinanga District Tigabinanga Subdistrict Karo)*, which both discuss the struggle of women to improve family welfare (Daulay et al., 2019). The study is different from the research conducted by current researchers in that it wants to deepen the role of women, especially those who work at the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, in improving the family economy. Furthermore, research conducted by Sulfiana et al. entitled *Gender Equality in Economic Development: Evoking Social Change* also explains women's roles in making social change through economic improvement (Sulfiana et al., 2023). The research conducted by researchers not only discusses the role of women in improving the economy but also wants to see from an Islamic economic perspective about these efforts. Research by Maulana et al. entitled *The Effects of Economic Competitiveness, Economic Freedom, Financial Development and Gender Equality on International Trade in ASEAN Countries* discusses the role of women in ASEAN countries in driving the economy (Maulana et al., 2023). This research will be conducted in a narrower space in Way Serdang sub-district with a more in-depth analysis of the efforts of local women in facing family economic problems.

Looking at previous research that also discusses the role of women, of course, a novelty wants to be sought through this research. This article can provide new perspectives and studies on the women's movement, especially the portrait of the contribution of working women in the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, Way Serdang district, Mesuji regency, Lampung province in supporting family income in terms of Islamic economic perspective and *Mubādalāh* review.

METHODS

This study presented Islamic conditions and views on working women in the family in helping to increase family income. The research was conducted at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji Regency, Lampung province. This study used descriptive qualitative research methods to understand and explain the status and role of working women, especially those who work in the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, in meeting family needs (Noor, 2015). Authors use this method because the research subjects studied are the main actors, thus allowing authors to describe the phenomenon of women workers in the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* based on existing field data.

The approach used by researchers in this study is phenomenological (Friesen, 2023). The phenomenological approach is an approach that serves to study a phenomenon through the relationships that occur between social actors. This research was conducted at the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* in Way Serdang District, Mesuji Regency, Lampung. *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* Company was founded by Wasini on July 17, 2017, with five workers (Wasini,

2023). *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* is a company that produces formal semi-formal clothing (such as shirts and dresses) and Muslim women clothing. This convection has developed quite well and can provide additional income to employees and value benefits to the surrounding environment. Rapid changes in trends and fashion also deliver the development of this business.

Furthermore, the research data collection was carried out for three months, from January to March 2023. The reason for choosing the time is because, at the beginning of the year, the convention worked a lot on orders. The data source in this study used primary data sources and secondary data. The primary data source was obtained through interviews with female workers at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*. The interview process is carried out during work breaks so as not to interfere with the production process at the convention. Secondary data sources are obtained from books, magazines, internet references, and previous research related to this research. Then, this research data analysis model uses interaction analysis (Suparman, 2020). Where the information obtained from in-depth interviews is selected and classified to be analyzed interactively continuously until the data is saturated and conclusions are obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Women and Family in Islam

In etymological reviews, the word woman comes from Sanskrit, which means master. *Master* is pinned on respected, honoured, glorified, and appreciated people (Bahri S, 2015). Islam itself positions women in a very respectable position. Even Islam also clearly explains the rights and obligations of women in social life. However, until now, in real life in society, the themes of discussion about women in Islam are often misinterpreted. So, that phenomenon causes much debate among scholars.

Whereas comprehensively, Islam talks about women's duties both in the private and public spheres. In the private sphere, Islam talks about women who have reproductive functions such as menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and managing child development. Islam also talks about equality between men and women in the public sphere. Through these two points of view, Islam wants to position both men and women fairly and equally (as individuals and groups of people) who are both caliphs on earth to prosper human life collectively (Zaim, 2019). This phenomenon is also reflected in women's activities in Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji regency, Lampung province, where they do their tasks at home (private/domestic domain) and work to help their husbands earn additional income (public domain).

Geographically, Way Serdang District is a sub-district located in the west of Mesuji Regency with a distance from the capital city of Mesuji Regency \pm 70 km. Typographically, the Way Serdang sub-district has an area of 22,223,125 Ha (BPS, 2023). In an interview with Way Serdang sub-district head, Firuzi explained that this sub-district has 20 villages with a population of 46,571 people, and almost 83 percent of the area consists of land used by the community for agriculture as well as rubber and oil palm plantations. Therefore, most people there depend on agriculture and plantations for their needs.

Most of the division of roles between men and women in the Way Serdang sub-district tends to focus on the type of work. Heavy work in the fields or the garden is left to the males. While women do more work in the house, such as taking care of children and cooking. However, some help their husbands in the fields and gardens or work in the service/trade sector, one of which works at the Muslim Our Fashion Convection (Firuzi, 2023).

The emergence of this division of labour is the result of cultural construction that has occurred for a long time. Then, there began to be a slight change, where rural women began to work in the public sector because of the increasing need. At the same time, the husband's income fluctuated—considering that agricultural and plantation yields often decreased. However, based on this presentation, women in the Way Serdang sub-district have begun to be given the freedom to be

able to access activities in public spaces (working outside the home) to patch up the lack of income of their husbands while not interfering with their responsibilities of taking care of the household.

To reinforce equality between men and women in social life, women must be given space to improve their quality and roles so that they are not domesticated by the household routines that shackle them. In addition, their rights must also be respected and given a sense of security because many working women are vulnerable to discrimination, sexual violence, stereotyping and exploitation because they experience a double burden. Often, working women are not only required to complete their responsibilities at work (office), but they are also charged with completing their obligations in taking care of household tasks. Moreover, if these two responsibilities cannot be adequately resolved, then it is very vulnerable for them to experience domestic violence, oppression, and other acts of violence (Amanda et al., 2022). Therefore, it is very vulnerable for women who choose to work outside the home if gender equality and interplay have not received a good space.

In the lives of Muslim women workers, economic conditions are the main reason they work to earn extra income and help their husbands. Basic needs (clothing, food, shelter, health, and education) that continue to increase result in the husband's income from agricultural and plantation products being unable to cover everything. In this position, the wife chose to work in the public sector to provide for her household. In this situation, the values of interrelationship (*Mubādalāh*) between husband and wife are practiced to share duties with each other in managing household affairs (Kodir, 2019). Of course, with a note, the husband is also willing to share the responsibility of taking care of home affairs with his wife.

Conceptually, *Mubādalāh* or interrelationship is not limited to the relationship between husband and wife but, more broadly, between various social statuses such as children and parents, teachers and students, students and lecturers, and so on. This fact is by the diction /*Mubādalāh*/ meaning replacing, changing, exchanging, turning, exchanging, and the meaning of reciprocity (Kodir, 2019). Later, in Indonesian, the term *Mubādalāh* was interpreted as the similarity between men and women because both benefits from the other.

Mubādalāh is focused on that friendliness, administration, and all the pleasant work that a spouse must do for his partner and a wife to her partner. The guidelines of *Mubādalāh* in their application cover all qualities and standards of justice and humanity. Balance and humanity are critical for recognizing profit, goodness, and equality (Adib & Mujahidah, 2021). By this standard, men need to be regarded for who they are, their decisions, their voices heard, and their every desire satisfied, and so do women. Women also have the right to be seen, to be heard, to have their voices heard, and to be satisfied. This same point of view will create a view that purifies people. A view that encourages equal and equal relationships for women who live in society (Kodir, 2019). This concept is further reflected by the Muslim women workers whose rights to work in the public sphere are heard by their husbands. Thus, the concept of interconnection can be adequately realized and positively impact the sustainability of their households because the basic needs of their families are fulfilled.

As a result of an interview with Wasini, she revealed that at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* it opens opportunities for anyone who wants to work. According to him, the most important thing is the expertise that matches the needs to carry out work at the convention.

In looking for employers, I am not picky between men and women. Most importantly for me, their expertise matches what I need. So that the work in convection can be completed properly (Wasini, 2023).

This data means that Wasini holds the principle of gender equality in recruiting employees. He does not look at or choose employees based on gender but rather on the skills or competencies possessed. The concept of *Mubādalāh* is by the principle of gender equality, especially in the economic field, as done by Wasini in managing the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, namely: First,

having equal acceptance of workers, for example, all genders are entitled to equal opportunities and reach in a job position. It is very unwise if the gender factor is used as an excuse to abuse their right to get equal job opportunities; second, it also avoids the concept that women are only suitable for the kitchen, so they are not allowed to work or have careers (Adib & Mujahidah, 2021). Applying the concept of *Mubādalāh* in the world of work in value provides opportunities for anyone – both men and women – to get equal opportunities (justice). So, gender is no longer the primary reference as it has been so far, but instead, competence is used as the standard. Then, the results of interviews with five female workers at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* explained that their motivation for working was to help their husbands provide for the family. Moreover, none of their accounts reported husbands forbidding them to work. Instead, they could work at the Muslim Fashion Convection for extra income.

The existence of interconnectedness in the family ultimately provides space for justice for wives and husbands in meeting household needs together. Given that the concept of *Mubādalāh* has a great goal to ensure justice and equality in relations between people and to encourage participatory collaboration, it is natural and beneficial for both without segregation. Public space is not only reserved for men, but private space (home) is also not forced on women. So that there is an attachment between private and public space to be owned and become a responsibility together.

So, the efforts of the women of the Way Serdang sub-district in supporting the family economy by working at the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* are an applicative form of the concept of *Mubādalāh*. Where the concept of *Mubādalāh*, according to Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir is the principle of relating between men and women equally or interplay, which is not only the relationship between husband and wife but broadly in all social constructions, such as employees and leaders, children and parents, and so on (Kodir, 2019). Since Islam also affirms that what distinguishes between a man and a woman is faith, not gender, it is not justified in any act to dominate each other based on sex.

Simply put, the interplay is presented to complement the dynamics of texts and realities in the Islamic tradition, which still presents little awareness that women are the same subjects as men. This concept can give constructive meaning to the reality of women's lives and raise the principles of relations between men and women in the realm of the household (Kodir, 2019). There are four principles in marriage according to the Qur'an, namely the principle of pairing between husband and wife '*zawāj*', relationships and behaviour between husband and wife to do good to each other '*mu'āsyarah bilma'rūf*', process mutual agreements by sharing opinions '*musyawarah*', and give up each other '*tarāḍin*' (Siregar & Irham, 2022). These four principles are then used as an essential foundation for creating harmonious relationships in marriage. Allah also affirms these values in his words, which become a reference for Muslims in building relationships with fellow humans.

As narrated in the Qur'an, Allah Almighty created man in pairs, complementing each other. This statement is confirmed in the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13.

O humanity, Indeed! We created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you might know one another. Indeed, the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing (Al-Qur'an, 2019).

In the verse, Islam gives status and roles to women to support the responsibilities held by men (Irsyadah, 2022). However, in another word of Allah Almighty, in the Quran Surah An-Nisa verse 34, Islam affirms that only men are obliged to provide for their families. However, according to the *Mubādalāh* tafsir, this verse is talking about the demands of those with primacy '*faḍl*' and property '*nafaqah*' to be responsible for sustaining those who are incapable and do not have property (Kodir, 2019). In practice, this is like what the working women at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* do. They work to assist their husbands in meeting the needs of their household. Of course, in this case, they do not intend to violate their nature as women. Instead, they submit to the rules of Allah by trying their best to continue to move the wheels of their household. Moreover, there are limitations

for the husband in meeting his family's needs because the results of agriculture and plantation often experience the lowest prices.

Therefore, we need to understand the context of working women accurately. Where they are not the backbone of the family, women are more about helping the husband so that his family is fulfilled. From this phenomenon, we are also increasingly enlightened that men would not complete their lives without the presence of a female figure. Even as we know that, man is born from the womb of a woman that is a mother and raised by her. The teachings of religion itself always put women in a noble position. The characteristics of women as mothers are not only natural roles by conceiving, giving birth and breastfeeding but also nurturing their children until adulthood. Even in modern life, there is a shift in values marked by the release of a mother's responsibility for the growth and development of children because they are busy with work. Their children are handed over to maids and daycare centers (Utari, 2020). However, there are still women like the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* workers who continue to do their household tasks optimally.

Women and Family Economy

Increasing human needs and increasingly limited natural resources, followed by low family income, result in unmet household needs, thus forcing women to work in the public sector. This condition is experienced by working women in *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*, Way Serdang district, Mesuji regency, Lampung province. They chose to work to find an additional source of income at the convention to help her husband provide for his family's economic needs.

Meeting family needs is vital for the sustainability of the household. Therefore, as the head of the family, the husband has the duty and responsibility to meet the needs of his household. However, in social reality, a few heads of families cannot meet their families' basic needs due to small salaries, unemployment, or illness. The existence of this condition usually forces a wife's instinct to work and try to contribute to meeting the economic needs of her family (Hanum & Safuridar, 2018). Especially for those who already have children, of course, there will be a great sense of responsibility to meet their needs.

The existence of unfavourable economic conditions that force both partners (husband and wife) to work has become common in today's society. There is no prohibition for women to work or pursue careers in the public sector within the teachings of Islam if their work does not interfere with their duties and obligations of taking care of the household (Bahri S, 2015). Moreover, Islam is also a *wasatīyah* religion that is exceptionally accommodating and does not limit women who want to do activities outside the home (work) to support the family economy (Aulia et al., 2021). This data means that the efforts of working women at the *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* to help their husbands provide for their families are not prohibited by religion.

The role of women in the public sector is no longer taboo in Indonesian society; Indonesian women have filled public spaces in various social, political, educational, and especially economic sectors. The urgency of women entering the economic sector is a sign that women have become actors concerned about their existence in improving and encouraging grassroots economic growth (Kartika & Rabial Kanada, 2017). Working women can contribute positively; they can support their husbands to reduce the burden and responsibility of the household to provide for the family. The way Serdang women work at *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection* can undoubtedly be a diminutive reflection of women who can contribute to the family economy. Their work can reduce the burden of household needs and even set aside their income for emergency funds (O'Toole & Macgarvey, 2003).

Working women can be categorized into at least two groups: *first*, they just channel hobbies and develop themselves and careers, from now on known as career women; *Second*, they work to help the family economy (Aulia et al., 2021). Historically, women working in the public sector have existed since the beginning of Islam, and there is no prohibition on them becoming workers (either to develop their careers or make ends meet). Moreover, they work because no one bears or meets

their living expenses, so they must work to find sustenance (Shihab, 2003). The phenomenon that occurs in Way Serdang sub-district, women choose to work because they want to help the family economy because their husband's income often fluctuates (ups and downs). So, to meet their household needs, they work in the service/production sector such as in *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*.

Furthermore, several factors encourage women to enter the workforce: (1) Help meet and alleviate household and family needs, (2) Encourage women to be more productive and able to optimize their time and potential, (3) The existence of challenging jobs for men to do requires women to do these things (Akter et al., 2023), (4) There is a need for social relationships, such as the desire of working women to socialize with others, build a better social identity, and seek essential life experiences and fun that are not found at home, and (5) Women's need for self-actualization (Aulia et al., 2021).

As previously stated, most Way Serdang women work in the public sector to provide for their family's financial needs. It is not taboo for them if men and women are equally responsible for the continuity of their household. Ideally, as the head of the family, the man is responsible for providing for his family, including supporting the family's income. However, in certain circumstances, women can also help meet the family's financial needs (Wahid & Lancia, 2018). This opinion is certainly a solution so that the kitchen at home remains steaming. If household needs cannot be fulfilled together, many things must be sacrificed (such as food, health, and education costs will be neglected).

Women's participation in supporting family needs in Way Serdang results from an agreement with married couples. Moreover, husbands realize that their family's daily needs can only be fulfilled by relying on their relatively small income. Because of the disparity between income and expenditure, women (wives) must help meet the economic needs of their families (Yahna, 2023). So, deficiencies in meeting the needs of life that the husband cannot fulfil can be closed by his wife.

Then, to manage family finances, women have an essential role in managing all household expenses so that the income earned from work is sufficient to meet needs. Meanwhile, men (husbands) tend to give all their income to their wives (Chu & Zhang, 2023). Women in Way Serdang in household management are at least divided into three groups of expenditure: 1) The financial part for daily needs such as food, clothing, children's school fees and urgent needs such as illness; 2) Financial part for transportation; 3) The financial part for the benefit of community life includes the need to donate (celebration) and alms (Ami, 2023).

In reality, women in Way Serdang District, Mesuji Regency, have a role and are enough to help the family economy. The conditions developed in Way Serdang District gained enough legitimacy from the community through views and values about their role in helping their family's economy. They can not only do domestic work, namely taking care of the household, but also be able to play a role in the public sector to find additional income to meet and improve the family economy. This portrait of their struggle illustrates that women in Way Serdang are responsible for their families and must take on a dual role to contribute to and support the family economy.

The Economic Contribution of Women in the Family Islamic Perspective

The role of women in improving family welfare is one of the crucial efforts in providing access for women to contribute to the household economic sector (Shenbei et al., 2023). In addition, they also need to strengthen their knowledge and skills in managing existing economic resources so that they can stand up and make an optimal contribution to the family economy.

As one of the economic actors, women are the driving actors of the economy both in the domestic space as managers of household needs and in public spaces, where they also participate in efforts to create collective welfare (Welsh et al., 2016). Despite stereotypes, violence continues to lurk at women. However, this can be anticipated by equal social relations between women and men.

Such as the relationship built by the community in Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji regency, where women and men in the family can work well together. The growth of gender understanding in society is an essential factor and a driver for realizing interconnectedness in the family (Schwekendiek & Baten, 2019). This data can be seen from the awareness and responsibility of each family member towards their duties. Taking care of household matters such as washing, cooking, and taking care of children is not only the wife's duty but also the husband's responsibility. Then, in meeting the family's needs, they can work together, where the husband works in the rice fields and garden while the wife seeks additional income by working on *Kita Muslim Fashion Convection*.

Social practices carried out by the people of Way Serdang are essential indicators of how they can understand and implement gender equality in community life. It was found that women and men have an equal relationship in interrelationships (*Mubādalāh*). They can work well together to meet the economic needs of their family. Suparni states that the goal is to empower women to help the family economy and solve family and community problems (Suparni, 2023). With the hope that women can be more independent in building a business.

Islam allows women to participate in economic activities while still within the corridors of Islamic rules and principles (Muslikhati, 2004). In the case of the Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji sub-district, the role of the wife is to take care of the children and the house quite well, and working in the public sector still needs to include work in the household. Even the husband, as the head of the family, supports his wife's activities to work outside the home. The truth is also not against the rules in Islam because a wife who chooses to work outside the home will not degrade her husband's dignity as the head of the family. With a note if his work is good and gets approval from his partner. As confirmed in the Qur'an Surah An-Nisā verse 34.

Men (husbands) are responsible for women (wives) because Allah has favored some of them (men) over others (women) and because they (men) have spent part of their property. Righteous women are those who obey (to Allah) and take care of themselves when (their husbands) are not around because Allah has taken care of (them) (Al-Qur'an, 2019).

In *Tafsīr Mubādalāh*, the above verse does not affirm the leadership or responsibility of men towards women based on gender. In Islam, a person is not given the burden of responsibility just because he has a gender alone but because of his abilities and achievements. *Tafsīr Mubādalāh* asserts that this verse is talking about the demands on those who have primacy '*faḍl*' and property '*nafaqah*' to be responsible for sustaining those who are incapable and do not have property. This opinion is the main idea in the verse, an idea that is universal and publishable (Kodir, 2019).

In the case of male leadership over all family members in domestic life, it basically cannot then reduce women's rights, including private property rights and administrative rights (Shihab, 2013). This sentence means that every woman can work in various professional fields, both in the household and public services, even though she already has a head of the family (husband).

With the empowerment of women and being able to work to help the family economy so that the family economy is more prosperous. Quran Surah Hūd verse 6: "No animal moves on the earth but is guaranteed sustenance by Allah. He knew where he lived and where he was stored" (Al-Qur'an, 2019). Women's intention to work is to help their husbands meet household needs and improve family welfare. Their contribution to improving the family economy can indirectly strengthen their household buildings. Moreover, Allah Almighty has also given women and men sufficient potential and ability to survive.

The practice carried out by women working in the public sector is clear evidence that women's contribution to encouraging the family economy significantly impacts household harmony. There is also essentially a noble duty of a woman as a devoted wife to her husband and to be a mother to her children, whom they continue to work on. Moreover, Islam does not prohibit women from working to support the family economy as long as the essential duties and

responsibilities in the family can be adequately managed. However, the responsibility of earning a living is still essentially on men's shoulders.

If we look at the prophetic time of Muhammad, women occupied important positions in the public sector. Like Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet, the other Gaffariyah, Shafiyah. Including Khadija, known in Islam as a businesswoman known for the *Mudārabah* contract. Likewise with Zainab bint Jahsy (Wife of the Prophet Muhammad) who worked for almsgiving. Raidhah, The wife of the Prophet's companion Ibn Masud, also worked to help provide for her family (Nurhadi, 2020).

Women who contributed to the economic fulfillment of the family have been going on since the time of the Prophet, and these activities were also carried out by the wives of the Prophet and the companions of the Prophet. In the current situation, being a breadwinner is no longer an extended taboo for women; some are even the backbone of the family to help the family financially and avoid slander and begging. Of course, they remember and shirk their duties and responsibilities as wives and mothers of their children.

The roles of men and women in the family should support, complement, and strengthen each other. This opinion also includes the allocation of gender roles, which can be changed. The husband does not have to occupy a dominant position in the public service (breadwinner), but he can also occupy the opposite role. Likewise, the role of a wife (woman) who has the ability and willingness to work in public spaces. Especially for families whose husband's income is not enough to cover the family's basic needs, it is okay for the wife to take over her role to support the family's finances.

CONCLUSION

Islam is quite flexible in terms of leadership and family roles. Even Islam dismisses the image of women as *konco wingking* 'person responsible for doing household chores'; instead, women should be allowed to have equal rights and positions in carrying out responsibilities within the family. Although men and women have different body structures, characteristics, duties, and responsibilities, it does not prevent them from building interconnectedness in the family. The phenomenon that occurs in female workers of the *Kita Muslim* Fashion Convection in Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji Regency, reflects the application of the concept of interconnection. Household chores and family needs can be sought together. The implication is that gender equality values in the family can be instilled. Despite the advantages of women conceiving and men being obliged to earn a living, interplay creates a fair division of labour. This condition encourages complementing and replacing each other's existing tasks or responsibilities. Women can replace or share the burden of meeting family needs with their partners. Likewise, men can help their wives in completing tasks in the household. In the view of Islamic economics, the efforts of women in the Way Serdang sub-district, Mesuji regency, contribute to supporting the family economy by becoming *Kita Muslim* Fashion Convection workers. Moreover, their efforts are to help their husbands meet the needs of their families. This phenomenon becomes a collective effort between husband and wife to ensure survival.

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