

Bridging the Harmony between Islamic Family Law, Feminism, and International Law: An Evaluative and Prescriptive Study

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Abstract

The problem of the relationship between Islamic family law, feminism, and international law is often triggered by epistemological distinction. The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify the potential synergy between Islamic family law, feminism, and international law through evaluative and prescriptive analysis. The research data uses online news sources, official government reports, international family law regulations, and classical fiqh literature. The results of the study indicate that methodological tools, such as *al-'urf*, *al-istihsān*, *al-istiṣhāb*, and *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* can serve as a gender-responsive approach to Islamic family law without being overshadowed by the homogenisation of international law. This study contributes to the potential integration of Islamic legal epistemology, feminism, and international law in constructing a modern Islamic family law that is adaptive to the gender relations of the global Muslim community.

Keywords: Dialogue, Islamic Family Law, Feminism, International Law

Abstrak

*Problem relasi hukum keluarga Islam, feminisme, dengan hukum internasional seringkali dipicu oleh distingsi epistemologis. Tujuan studi kualitatif ini untuk mengidentifikasi potensi sinergitas antara Hukum Keluarga Islam, feminisme, dan hukum internasional melalui analisa evaluatif dan perskriptif. Data penelitian menggunakan sumber berita daring, laporan resmi pemerintah, peraturan hukum keluarga internasional, dan literatur fikih klasik. Hasil studi menunjukkan perangkat metodologis, seperti *al-'urf*, *al-istihsān*, *al-istiṣhāb*, dan *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* dapat menjadi pendekatan hukum keluarga Islam yang responsif jender tanpa terabaikan oleh homogenisasi hukum internasional. Studi ini berkontribusi pada potensi integrasi epistemologi hukum Islam, feminisme, dan hukum internasional dalam membangun konstruksi hukum keluarga Islam modern yang adaptif terhadap relasi jender umat Islam global.*

Kata Kunci: Dialog, Hukum keluarga Islam, Feminisme, Hukum Internasional

INTRODUCTION

The present study explored the evolving landscape of family law practices within contemporary Muslim societies, illuminating the growing discord between Islamic family law norms and the human rights-based international family law regime. This tension has emerged as a consequence of the increasing number of divorce cases (Al Gharaibeh & Islam, 2024; Fatahillah et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2024; Jeffrey & Zaki, 2025; Kurniawan et al., 2025; Sattar & Yousaf, n.d.), child custody disputes (Gunawan et al., 2025; Rasyid et al., 2024; Zaki, n.d.), and claims for gender equality (Ansori & Juliansyahzen, 2022; Begum et al., 2024; Fatahillah et al., 2024; Luhuringbudi, Gunawan, et al., 2025; Sattar & Yousaf, n.d.) that were perceived to contradict classical concepts such as *al-qiwāmah*, *al-ṭalāq*, and *al-wilāyah*. Muslim diaspora communities in Europe and America encounter legal dilemmas when state regulations conflict with their normatively understood practices of *fiqh al-usrah* (Hasanah et al., 2025). A variety of resolution efforts have been made through legislative reform (Demircigil, 2025), cross-cultural mediation, and advocacy based on the CRC and CEDAW. However, these efforts often fail to address the epistemic roots of the problem. Therefore, this social reality demonstrated the urgency of intercivilizational dialogue as a pressing ethical and methodological approach.

Research trends on Islamic family law and gender demonstrated the dominance of two major streams: the normative *fiqh* approach and the human rights-oriented international law approach. The extant literature on *al-turāth al-fiqhī* has been subject to conflicting interpretations. Some studies position the texts as static, authoritative sources (Carabregu-Vokshi et al., 2024; Elston, 2022), while others adopt a universalistic perspective (Fäcke, 2025; Masuwd, n.d.; “Unity or Divergence: Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Perspective on Interfaith Moderation,” n.d.) that often disregards the historical and methodological context of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. For instance, studies on *al-khulʿ* and *al-ṭalāq* frequently conclude with formal-legal debates (Hoque, 2025; Petersen, 2021; ZERDOUMI, 2024), neglecting to delve into the concepts of *maṣlahah* and the legitimacy of *ijtihād*. Furthermore, these studies rarely employ the theoretical frameworks of the dialogue of civilizations or the theory of cultural translation to interpret the dynamics of family law across different contexts. Therefore, a significant knowledge gap exists concerning the absence of a dialogical framework capable of effectively bridging Islamic gender values and international family law in an equal and reflective manner.

The global paradigm shift in the management of cross-border family law has given rise to an urgent need to conceptually define what was meant by Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law. This concept remained characterized by an epistemological lacuna, as evidenced by the predominance of a normative-dogmatic approach or mere comparisons of positive law within the confines of a unidimensional dialogical framework of civilizations. In the context of contemporary discourse, dialogue between civilizations was conceptualized as a process of *takhāṭub ḥadārī* (religious interpretation) that aimed to achieve a harmonious reconciliation between the values of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh al-usrah*), as exemplified by *khulʿ*, *ṭalāq*, and women's authority, as articulated by al-Sarakhsī in *al-Mabsūṭ*, and international family law norms derived from

the CRC and CEDAW. This approach was reinforced by the legitimacy of *ijtihad* and the dynamics of legal change in al-Āmidī's *Al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, as well as the orientation of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and *maṣlaḥah al-usrah* in al-Shāṭibī's *Al-Muwāfaqāt* as ethical-dialogical foundations. The present study utilized a descriptive qualitative design grounded in textual data from online news reports, official government reports, and *turāth* books. The objective of the research was to explore intercivilizational dialogue, with a focus on the intersection of Islamic gender values and international family law.

The emergence of controversy between the universality of international family law norms and the particularity of Islamic law necessitated the formulation of systematic and applicable stages of inter-civilizational dialogue. The primary research gap pertains to the dearth of a staged dialogue model that was not only normative but also operational within the context of the Muslim diaspora community. The stages of dialogue in this study commence with the normative *ta'aruf* phase, which involves a comparative study of regulations. This was followed by the *tahlīl taqāṭu'ī* phase, which examined the intersection of values between classical *fiqh al-usrah* and the principles of global gender justice. This intersection included the social rationality of family law in Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid*. The subsequent phase involved *tarjamah thaqāfiyyah*, as conceptualized within the framework of Homi K. Bhabha's Cultural Translation theory. This theoretical framework was empirically evaluated through the lens of legal ethnography, with a focus on Muslim diaspora communities in Europe and America. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of *turāth* data, contemporary policy documents, and diaspora social practices into a single framework of civilizational dialogue oriented towards cross-cultural family matters.

The evolution in scientific orientation has prompted this study to examine the Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law as a conceptual conduit between Islamic gender values and international family law. The formal object of this research was the dialogue between civilizations in Islamic family law, while the material objects included Islamic gender values and international family law as the unit of analysis. The present research employed a qualitative-descriptive design, incorporating textual data in the form of online news, official government and UN reports, and *turāth* books, including al-Mabsūṭ by al-Sarakhsī (*khul'* and women's authority), *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* by al-Āmidī (legitimacy of *ijtihad*), and *al-Muwāfaqāt* by al-Shāṭibī (*maqāṣid* and *maṣlaḥah al-usrah*). The data collection techniques employed included a literature review, documentation, comparative studies of family law regulations, and legal ethnography in Muslim diaspora communities. Therefore, the objective of this research was to examine how civilizational dialogue facilitates normative integration without compromising the identity of Islamic law.

The emergence of the inter-civilizational dialogue paradigm serves as the foundation for this paper's central argument, which posits that Islamic family law is not inherently incompatible with international family law. This assertion was predicated on the premise that Islamic gender values are ingrained in the tenets of *al-'adl*, *al-maṣlaḥah*, and *raf' al-darar*, which were deemed congruent with the objective of safeguarding human

rights. This paper utilized a dialogical reading of *al-Mabsūt*, *al-Iḥkām*, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, *al-Umm*, and *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid* to demonstrate the existence of contextual social and ethical rationality in the family. A review of international reports and the legal practices of the Muslim diaspora revealed that the emerging conflict was more a matter of cultural translation than a clash of substantive values. Therefore, the present paper posits that intercivilizational dialogue was the most adequate conceptual and methodological approach to address the aforementioned challenges.

RESEARCH METHODS

The emerging cross-civilizational debate in Islamic family law positions Islamic gender values and international family law as the primary material objects and units of analysis, which were consciously and deliberately chosen. This curated collection of material objects was predicated on the recognition that values such as *al-'adl*, *al-maṣlaḥah*, *raf' al-ḍarar*, and *ḥifz al-usrah* were present at the nexuses and tensions between the CRC and CEDAW regimes within a global context. To illustrate this point, consider the issues of *al-khul'*, *al-ṭalāq*, women's authority, and family justice within Muslim diaspora communities. These issues demonstrated the process of normative negotiation between Islamic law and international family law. Therefore, the Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law functioned as a formal object that encompassed the analysis of the relationships, tensions, and potential reconciliation between these two value systems. Methodological trends in contemporary Islamic legal studies demonstrated the urgent need for a qualitative-descriptive design capable of simultaneously examining text, context, and practice. The selection of this design was predicated on its capacity to facilitate an exhaustive examination (Dwinandita, 2024; Luhuringbudi, Yahya Komarudin, et al., 2025; Setyawati et al., 2024) of the Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law as the formal object, with Islamic Gender Values and International Family Law as the material objects of analysis, undertaken in a reflective and non-reductionist manner. In practice, this design operates through a critical reading of the texts of *al-turāth al-fiqhī*, international family law regulations, and contemporary media representations (Ghaly & al-Khatib, 2023; Laabdi, 2024). Consequently, a qualitative-descriptive approach is regarded as the most suitable for capturing the dynamics of meaning, shifts in authority, and the process of cultural translation in global Islamic family law.

The shift in the orientation of data sources in the study of Islamic family law has prompted this paper to utilize primary data in the form of authoritative texts and verified contemporary documents. The following primary sources were consulted: online news outlets and official government and UN reports, as well as classical *turāth* books. The concepts of *al-khul'*, *al-ṭalāq*, and women's authority in Shams al-A'imma Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Abī Sahl al-Sarakhsī's *al-Mabsūt* (juz 6:168–172; juz 7:3–6), the legitimacy of *al-ijtihād* and legal change in 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Sālim al-Āmidī's *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* (juz 4:162–165), and *maqāṣid* and *maṣlaḥah al-usrah* in *al-Muwā*. The present text was an excerpt from *Faqāt fī Uṣūl al-Sharī'ah*, authored by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Shāṭibī. The specific excerpts in question can be found in Juz 2, pages

195 through 198, and in Juz 4, pages 92 through 95. The Qur'an also draws upon other sources, including the Book of the Prophet (*Kharāj*) by Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥabīb al-Anṣārī (125–128), the Book of the Prophet (*Kitāb al-Umm*) by Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (Juz 5:137–140), and the *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid* by Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Rushd al-Qurṭubī (Juz 2:320–323). The selection of these sources was conducted through a meticulous process, with criteria including scholarly authority, direct relevance to family law, and the potential to illuminate normative dialogue across civilizations. The methodological controversies that characterized the study of Islamic family law underscored the necessity of systematic, multi-layered data collection techniques to ensure the attainment of adequate results. Therefore, this paper utilized literature and documentation techniques (Fatahillah et al., 2024; Teguh et al., 2025; “نداء أخلاقي في تقارير الإنفلونزا الإسبانية من أجل النمو المستدام: دراسة في رواية” n.d.), including a comparative study of international family law regulations and Islamic law, as well as legal ethnography of Muslim diaspora communities in Europe and America (Al-Shuqairat et al., 2025; Ghatas, 2023; Kozak-Isik, 2025). This technique was implemented through the selection of relevant information, the identification of significant textual passages, the retrieval of authoritative previous studies, academic record-keeping, and visual documentation in the form of screenshots of legitimate online data. The data collection process was intricately linked to the formal object of intercivilizational dialogue, the material object of Islamic gender values and international family law, and a qualitative-descriptive design that demands contextual precision.

The interdisciplinary approach employed in this study was characterized by three sequential theoretical stages that facilitate data analysis. First, Tariq Ramadan's Civilizational Dialogue Theory is employed to identify *al-ijtihād al-mu'āṣir* as a conduit between Islamic values and the universality of human rights (Ramadan, 2009b, 2009a, 2010). Second, Chandra Talpade Mohanty's Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory is utilized to critique Western epistemic dominance in defining the roles and rights of women in the Global South (Mohanty, 1984, 2004, 2013). Third, Homi K. Bhabha's Theory of Cultural Translation asserts that every law was the result of a cultural translation that is not neutral and always involves identity negotiation. All data were analyzed textually and contextually through in-depth reading of the sources of *turāth*, regulations, and social practices of the Muslim diaspora. Consequently, this analysis engenders a nuanced, critical, and quality understanding of the dialogue between civilizations in Islamic family law.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Civilizational Dialogue

The advent of global shifts in the family human rights regime signifies the rise of epistemic tensions between *fiqh al-usrah* and the international standards established by the CRC/CEDAW. This tension is resolved through Tariq Ramadan's Civilizational Dialogue Theory, which conceptualizes *ijtihād mu'āṣir* as an ethical conduit between Islamic normativity and the universality of human rights. The official United Nations report

through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) affirms the equality of rights and obligations of husband and wife in family relations, particularly in marriage and divorce (Article 16). Concurrently, al-Sarakhsī's Kitāb al-Mabsūṭ (juz 19, pp. 125–126) demonstrates that classical fiqh has acknowledged legal flexibility through the concepts of *al-wakālah*, *ikhtilāf al-ṣifah*, and the limitation of the authority of divorce based on a legitimate mandate. These data suggest that Islamic family law is not monolithic, but rather allows for legal negotiation based on context and public interest (*maṣlahah*). Consequently, the process of data reconciliation substantiates the notion that civilizational discourse within the framework of Islamic family law is indeed feasible. This is achieved through a gender-justice-based reinterpretation of fiqh, a reinterpretation that does not, in any way, negate the established authority of *turāth*.

The societal acceptance of gender equality among Muslims is an intricate and multifaceted phenomenon. The presentation of this dynamic phenomenon is characterized by Tariq Ramadan's employment of a dialogic approach, wherein he engages in a discourse that delineates the dichotomy between "Islamic law" and "international law." CEDAW's (1979) data demonstrate that gender discrimination within the family unit is conceptualized as a sociocultural and historical construct that can be addressed through legal and legislative measures. As indicated in the presentation of data from al-Mabsūṭ (al-Sarakhsī, juz 19, hlm. 125–126), it is evident that the practices of Islamic law since its inception have taken into account the rationality, legal mandate, and the protection of personal interests in matters related to marriage, divorce, and khul'. In addition, al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām (Juz 3, hlm. 48) by al-Āmidī asserts the legitimacy of ta'khīr al-bayān for the sake of maslahat, thereby creating space for the adaptation of legal principles to contemporary needs. The data demonstrate that the acceptance of gender equality among Muslim communities does not indicate a process of Westernization. Rather, it represents the culmination of a long-standing tradition of ijtihad, deeply rooted in the principles of usul al-fiqh.

The advent of a dialogic model of Islamic family law signifies a substantial metamorphosis within the contemporary Islamic legal milieu. Tariq Ramadan's theory of the dialogue of civilizations posits that the construction of Islamic family law must be grounded in universal ethics while preserving its normative Islamic identity. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) established a global framework for achieving equality, allocating shared responsibility, and safeguarding women's dignity within the family unit. The Kitāb al-Mabsut (al-Sarakhsī, volume 19, pp. 125–126) provides a fiqh foundation that family authority is functional and can be limited by mandate, intention, and benefit. Conversely, al-Iḥkām (al-Āmidī, volume 3, p. 48) offers a methodological justification for legal change through the postponement of legal explanation for the greater good. Consequently, a dialogic model of Islamic family law can be formulated as a normative system that is faithful to the *turāth*, responsive to human rights, and relevant to the global Muslim community.

Table 1. Civilization Dialogue in Islamic Family Law

Analytical Aspects	Sources and Authors	Key Textual Data (Summary)	Theoretical Implications (Tariq Ramadan)
Equality of Family Rights	<i>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</i> (CEDAW), United Nations	Article 16: Equality of rights and responsibilities of husband and wife	Universal human rights values become a space for ethical dialogue, not opposition to Islam
Divorce Authority and Legal Mandate	<i>al-Mabsūt</i> , Abū Bakr al-Sarakhsī (w. 483 H), juz 19, pp. 125–126	Limitation of the authority of divorce through waqalah and a valid mandate	Classical fiqh is functional and contextual
Legal Adaptation Methodology	<i>al-Ihkām fī Uṣūl al-Ahkām</i> , Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (w. 631 H), juz 3, page 48	Legitimasi <i>ta'khīr al-bayān</i> demi <i>maṣlahah</i> (Legitimacy of divorce for the sake of benefit)	Ijtihād mu'āṣir is an instrument for civilizational dialogue
Integrative Framework	<i>Civilizational Dialogue Theory</i> , Tariq Ramadan	Integration of Islamic ethics and global norms	Islamic family law is a dialogical and transformative system

Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory

The evolving global discourse on women's emancipation underscores a fundamental controversy in the manner in which international family law frames gender relations within Muslim societies. Data that has been reconciled through the lens of Chandra Talpade Mohanty's Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory perspective demonstrates that narratives of "emancipation" are often produced through a Western, universalistic lens that ignores colonial history and local social structures. The most salient example is the Turkish legal report on the 11th Judicial "Reform" Draft, which employs the rhetoric of "family protection" to regulate bodies, identities, and gender expressions, including women who deviate from normative domestic roles. A similar pattern is also evident in the early European legal regimes experienced by Lidia Poët and Emilie Kempin-Spyri, where women's emancipation was limited by definitions of masculine citizenship and state morality. This data reconciliation demonstrates that in both secular and Islamic contexts, family law is often used as an instrument of moral power. Consequently, the data reconciliation stage validates that the fundamental issue does not lie in the principle of gender justice itself, but rather in the entities responsible for its definition and the prevailing civilizational context.

Contemporary trends in intercivilizational dialogue demonstrate the emergence of a contextual approach to gender justice in Islamic law that challenges the hegemony of a single narrative. The data presented herein demonstrate that Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh al-usrah) has historically responded to gender justice through the principles of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, maṣlahah, and 'urf, rather than through the standardization of social roles. This notion is articulated in the works of Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī, particularly in his *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Sharī'ah*, which establishes the paramountcy of safeguarding human welfare—defined as ḍarūriyyāt, ḥājīyyāt, and taḥsīniyyāt—as the fundamental legal principle. Historical data from Abū Yūsuf's *Kitāb al-Kharāj* also demonstrates the flexibility of legal

policy based on social context and public interest, rather than rigid dogma. When evaluated in the context of contemporary international legal practices, Islamic law emerges as a tradition of substantive justice that is frequently disregarded in global discourse. Consequently, the data presentation unveils a pattern that gender justice in Islam is characterized by dialogic processes, adaptability, and a foundation in the social realities of the community.

The necessity to reconstruct Islamic family law has emerged as a new phase of inter-civilizational dialogue, which demands a synthesis between normative values and local realities. The construction of data based on Mohanty's theory results in a critique of the export of the concept of women's emancipation that is detached from the historical experience of Muslim societies. By referencing the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as articulated by al-Shāṭibī, the reconstruction of Islamic family law can be undertaken to ensure gender justice without compromising its cultural and theological legitimacy. A concrete example is seen in the reinterpretation of husband-wife relations through the principles of *mu'āmalah*, *istiḥsān*, and *istiṣhāb*, which open up space for functional equality in marriage and divorce. This approach is consistent with the Civilizational Dialogue Theory propounded by Tariq Ramadan, which underscores *ijtihād mu'āṣir* as a conduit between Islamic values and international human rights norms. Consequently, the construction of data provides a novel perspective on the imperative for the establishment of gender-just Islamic family law, emphasizing the necessity of fostering dialogue between global and local civilizations, as opposed to the use of domination, to achieve this objective.

Table 2. Civilization Dialogue and Gender Justice in Islamic Family Law

Focus of Analysis	Primary Data Sources	<i>Turāth</i> / Theory	Analytical Meaning
Hegemoni Narasi Emansipasi	Laporan hukum & berita internasional (UN, reform draft Turki)	<i>Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory</i> (C.T. Mohanty)	Emansipasi sebagai konstruksi kuasa global
Keadilan Gender dalam Fiqh	<i>al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Sharī'ah</i> – Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī	<i>maqāṣid al-sharī'ah</i> , <i>maṣlaḥah</i> , <i>'urf</i>	Keadilan bersifat kontekstual-substantif
Fleksibilitas Kebijakan Hukum	<i>Kitāb al-Kharāj</i> – Abū Yūsuf	<i>al-siyāsah al-shar'iyah</i>	Hukum adaptif pada realitas sosial
Rekonstruksi Hukum Keluarga	Analisis komparatif Islam–HAM	<i>ijtihād mu'āṣir</i> , <i>mu'āmalah</i>	Kesetaraan fungsional relasi keluarga
Kerangka Dialog Peradaban	<i>Civilizational Dialogue Theory</i> – Tariq Ramadan	<i>ethical universality</i> , contextual normativity	Sintesis nilai Islam & norma global

Theory of Cultural Translation

An examination of narrative data from the Muslim diaspora reveals that Islamic family law practices are executed through a process of cultural translation (Homi K. Bhabha), as illustrated in the online report *Beyond Mosque and Madrasa: Everyday Theology in Islam* (Kecia Ali on SherAli Tareen, 2022), which displays intra-familial negotiations, uneasy coexistence, and the shift of ritual authority from the mosque to the domestic space. The discordance between established norms and practical applications is a

recurring theme in Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī's (d. 204 AH) *al-Umm*, particularly with regard to the principles of {النَّفْسُ بِالنَّفْسِ}. As stated in Juz 7, on page 351, and in {إِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُمْ} {بِالْقِسْطِ}. As stated in Juz 4, p. 222, substantive equality and justice across communities are posited as the foundation of law. In the context of family relations, Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid* (d. 595 AH) delineates the range of *al-ṭalāq al-bā'in* and *al-raj'ī* and *al-khul'* (juz 3, pp. 83–93) as legal mechanisms that facilitate agency and negotiation, rather than unilaterally dominating. This finding confirms that the Bareilvi–Deobandi debate analyzed by Tareen does not stop at the doctrinal level, but is reinterpreted (translation in practice) in household economics, gender relations, and the identity of the Muslim minority diaspora. Consequently, Islamic family law manifests as a hybrid normative system (hybrid normativity), wherein the text of *turāth*, diasporic experiences, and gender power dynamics are intricately intertwined within the overarching framework of inter-civilizational dialogue.

As demonstrated in Saskia Brechenmacher's article, "The New Global Struggle Over Gender, Rights, and Family Values" (June 5, 2025), global data indicates the emergence of an alternative normative framework characterized by anti-gender backlash, nationalism, and religious authority. This framework is a response to the liberalization of international family law. This phenomenon can be conceptualized as a process of cultural translation (Homi K. Bhabha), whereby global norms on gender equality are translated, negotiated, and even rejected within local cultural and legal contexts. This perspective finds parallels in the *Kitāb al-Umm* by Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204 AH), particularly the principle of *al-ḥukm bayna ahl al-jizyah* (juz 4, p. 223), which underscores the malleability of the implementation of family law—including *ṭalāq*, *ilā'*, and *ḡihār*—provided that it does not result in harm. The act of directing one's attention or focus towards external entities or sources. Concurrently, Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid* (d. 595 AH) demonstrates that the disparities between *al-ṭalāq al-sunnī wa al-bid'ī* (juz 3, p. 86) and the discourse on *al-khul': faṣḥ am ṭalāq* (juz 3, p. 91) serve as manifestations of internal normative negotiation within the classical Islamic tradition. Therefore, the intercivilizational dialogue in Islamic family law emerges as a hybrid space of normativity, where the text of *turāth*, global political dynamics, and cultural resistance intertwine through the process of cross-cultural translation between local and international law.

According to Homi K. Bhabha's Theory of Cultural Translation, the concepts of marriage (*al-nikāḥ*) and divorce (*al-ṭalāq* and *al-khul'*) can be understood as normative concepts that are continuously "translated" (cultural translation) when moving from the framework of classical Islamic family law to the contemporary global welfare discourse. According to the data on happiness and life satisfaction compiled by Esteban Ortiz-Ospina and Max Roser (2013; updated 2024), major life events, such as marriage and divorce, do affect happiness (subjective well-being). However, the impact is considered to be adaptive and relatively impermanent. Therefore, the institutional meaning of both cannot be reduced to economic or psychological variables alone. This empirical finding aligns with the principle of *al-ḥukm bi al-zāhir* in Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī's *Kitāb al-Umm* (Juz 6, p. 215), which posits that legal judgment—including in family disputes—is based on the

outward expression of human beings, while the inner state (al-bāṭin) is left to the individual's moral responsibility. Concurrently, Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid* (Juz 3, pp. 89 and 92) demonstrates that the discourse concerning al-khul'—whether it is ṭalāq or fash—represents a manifestation of internal normative negotiation, thereby underscoring Islamic law's sensitivity to domestic dissatisfaction without disregarding its ethical and social dimensions. Therefore, the intercivilizational dialogue in Islamic family law demonstrates a hybrid normativity, where the texts of the turāth (al-turāth al-fiqhī), global welfare data, and contemporary cultural theories intertwine to reinterpret the meaning of marriage and divorce as ethical, social, and humanitarian institutions in a changing world landscape.

Table 3. Inter-Civilizational Dialogue in Islamic Family Law

Focus of Analysis	Sources of <i>Turāth</i> Data (Books & Authors)	Key <i>Turāth</i> Editorial Team	Global Data / Online News	Theoretical Framework
Negosiasi norma keluarga Islam dan HAM global	<i>Al-Mabsūt</i> – Shams al-A'imma Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Abī Sahl al-Sarakhsī	Khul' sebagai hak perempuan; otoritas istri dalam pemutusan ikatan (juz 6; juz 7)	Laporan UN Women & OHCHR tentang <i>gender equality</i> dan <i>family law reform</i>	<i>Civilizational Dialogue</i> (Tariq Ramadan)
Penerjemahan nilai gender Islam dalam konteks global	<i>Al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām</i> – 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Āmidī	Legitimasi <i>ijtihād</i> , perubahan hukum, dan <i>taḥqīq al-manāṭ</i> (juz 4)	Diskursus <i>anti-gender backlash</i> dalam laporan UN & media internasional	<i>Theory of Cultural Translation</i> (Homi K. Bhabha)
Hybrid normativity pernikahan & perceraian	<i>Al-Umm</i> – Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī; <i>Bidāyat al-Mujtahid</i> – Ibn Rushd	<i>al-ḥukm bi al-zāhir</i> ; <i>al-khul'</i> : <i>fash am ṭalāq</i> (juz 3–6)	Data kesejahteraan keluarga global (UN SDGs, well-being reports)	<i>Hybrid Normativity & Postcolonial Legal Pluralism</i>
Etika keluarga, kesejahteraan, dan kemaslahatan	<i>Al-Muwāfaqāt</i> – Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī	<i>Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah</i> dan <i>maṣlahah al-usrah</i> (juz 2; juz 4)	Agenda SDGs 5 & 16 tentang keluarga dan keadilan sosial	<i>Maqāṣid-based Governance</i>
Dialog antar peradaban sebagai metodologi hukum	Sintesis turāth fiqhī (al-Sarakhsī & al-Āmidī)	Integrasi <i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i> dan konteks sosial	Regulasi hukum keluarga di komunitas diaspora Muslim (Eropa/Amerika)	<i>Dialogical Ethics</i> (Tariq Ramadan)

The Dynamic Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law

Recent developments in the global family law landscape suggest a shift in the nature of inter-civilizational dialogue within the context of Islamic family law. This dialogue, which was previously confined to the realm of normative theology, is now becoming a space for the convergence of values between *al-turāth al-fiqhī* and the international legal regime. The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic gender values (qiyam al-*ndar-j* al-islāmiyyah) possess an inherent capacity to engage in dialogue with the principles of international

family law without compromising the foundation of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. Methodologically, a qualitative-descriptive analysis of textual data—both al-Sarakhsī's *al-Mabsūṭ* and al-Āmidī's *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*—demonstrates the consistency of the principles of *al-ʿadl*, *al-maṣlaḥah*, and *rafʿ al-ḍarar*. For instance, the concept of *khulʿ* in *al-Mabsūṭ* demonstrates the recognition of women's authority in dissolving marriage, while the legitimacy of *ijtihād* in *al-Iḥkām* opens up space for legal change. A recent United Nations report on gender equality and family law reform lends further credence to the hypothesis that the fundamental issue at hand is not a clash of values, but rather an epistemic tension in the interpretation of norms. Consequently, the present study fulfills the research objective by demonstrating that dialogue between civilizations functions as an integrative mechanism rather than a compromising one.

Controversy between Islamic family law and international family law often arises from reductionist readings of texts and contexts. The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic family law operates through the internal logic of Islamic jurisprudence, allowing for adaptation without deconstructing normative identities. This process can be interpreted as the articulation of *ijtihād muʿāṣir*, which serves to bridge classical texts and contemporary demands for justice. For instance, *taḥqīq al-manāṭ* in *al-Iḥkām* demonstrates that shifts in the social context can modify legal ramifications without invalidating the evidence. In the context of Islamic family law, *al-maṣlaḥah al-usrah* in the practice of *khulʿ* embodies legal rationality with a focus on family welfare. Consequently, the findings of this study underscore that the essence of dialogue transcends mere coexistence of norms, emphasizing instead the responsible production of novel legal interpretations.

The global trend of family law necessitates the contextualization of research findings within a theoretical framework that incorporates cross-civilizational and postcolonial elements. Tariq Ramadan's Civilizational Dialogue Theory offers a framework for understanding the role of *ijtihād muʿāṣir* in establishing an ethical bridge between *al-kulliyāt al-khams* and the universality of human rights. Chandra Talpade Mohanty's Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory demonstrates how Western epistemic dominance frequently positions Muslim women as objects of emancipation rather than legal subjects. Concurrently, Homi K. Bhabha's seminal theory of cultural translation posits that legal systems are inherently the products of complex cultural translations, often characterized by intricate negotiations of identity. The turāth data and United Nations reports included in this study demonstrate that Islamic gender values are not static; rather, they are negotiated through the context of the Muslim diaspora and state regulations. This contextualization demonstrates that intercivilizational dialogue operates within a hybrid space (hybrid normativity), not a binary opposition.

The advent of intercivilizational dialogue as a legal paradigm entails substantial theoretical and practical ramifications. Theoretically, the results of this study contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of *fiqh al-usrah* as a discipline that has the capacity to interact with human rights-based international law. These implications underscore the significance of reexamining concepts such as *al-qiwāmah*, *al-ṭalāq*, and *al-khulʿ* within the framework of *al-ʿadl al-jinsī*. In legal practice, these findings can influence the formulation

of family policies in countries with minority Muslim communities. To illustrate, the *maṣlahah mursalah* approach can be utilized to align national family regulations with the obligations of the CRC and CEDAW. Consequently, the findings of this study bear significant implications for policymakers, academics, and religious authorities.

A comparison of this research with previous studies on Islamic family law and gender reveals a shift in approach. A prevailing tendency in extant research has been to adopt a dichotomous approach, characterized by a polarity between two distinct orientations: one being an apologetic *fiqh* approach and the other being a normative liberal human rights approach. In contrast, this study proposes a dialogical synthesis that integrates the legal framework of *fiqh* and contemporary social theory. For instance, studies of international family law frequently overlook the internal legitimacy of *ijtihād*, while classical *fiqh* studies seldom take into account global dynamics. The present study employs an interdisciplinary approach, integrating data from United Nations reports and ethnographic research on the Muslim diaspora. This methodological sophistication enables a more comprehensive examination of the subject matter, transcending a purely textual approach. Therefore, the comparative contribution of this research lies in its ability to bridge two previously separate scholarly traditions.

The pressing necessity for policies grounded in dialogue necessitates the formulation of a coherent and pragmatic action plan. In light of the research findings, it is recommended that the *ijtihād mu'āṣir* framework be strengthened in Islamic family law legislation at both the national and international levels. It is imperative that both religious and state institutions adopt a civilizational dialogue approach as an ethical principle in legal formulation. For instance, the involvement of religious scholars, gender academics, and human rights experts in the reform of family law can serve to prevent normative conflicts. Moreover, Islamic legal education must incorporate a cultural translation perspective to ensure that prospective legal experts develop a comprehensive understanding of global dynamics. Consequently, this action plan underscores the notion that intercivilizational dialogue is not merely an abstract discourse but rather a sustainable and equitable policy strategy.

Table 4. Dialogue between Civilizations in Islamic Family Law

Discussion Focus	Key Findings	Basis of Turāth and Fiqh Concepts	Global Data / Context	Theoretical Framework
Summary	Dialogue between civilizations is integrative, not a conflict of values	Khul', al-'adl, al-maṣlahah (al-Mabsūt); <i>ijtihād</i> (al-Iḥkām)	UN report on family law reform & gender equality	Civilizational Dialogue (Tariq Ramadan)
Interpretation	Legal tensions stem from epistemic, not normative, issues	<i>tahqīq al-manāṭ</i> , <i>raf' al-darar</i> , <i>qawā'id fiqhiyyah</i>	Implementation of family law in a pluralistic state	Normative Integration
Contextualization	Family law is a product of cross-cultural negotiations	<i>ijtihād mu'āṣir</i> , <i>al-kulliyāt al-khams</i>	Muslim diaspora & global human rights regime	Ramadan; Mohanty; Bhabha

Discussion Focus	Key Findings	Basis of Turāth and Fiqh Concepts	Global Data / Context	Theoretical Framework
Implication	<i>Fiqh al-usrah</i> is relevant for modern legal governance	<i>maṣlaḥah al-usrah</i> , <i>al-'adl al-jinsī</i>	SDGs 5 & 16; CRC/CEDAW	<i>Maqāṣid-based Governance</i>
Comparison	Beyond the polarization of apologetic fiqh vs liberal human rights	Integration of <i>al-turāth al-fiqhī</i> & social theory	Previous international family law studies	<i>Dialogical Legal Pluralism</i>
Action Plan	Dialogue of civilizations as a legal policy strategy	<i>ijtihād mu'āṣir</i> , <i>istiḥsān</i> , <i>'urf</i>	Family law reform & legal education	<i>Applied Civilizational Dialogue</i>

CONCLUSION

The most salient emerging finding in this study demonstrates that the relationship between Islamic gender values and international family law is more appropriately understood as a space for normative dialogue rather than an arena for legal conflict. This reasoning emerges from an integrative reading of the concepts of *al-maṣlaḥah al-usrah*, *al-'urf*, and *al-ijtihād al-mu'āṣir*, which demonstrate the internal elasticity of Islamic law in responding to social change. As an analytical illustration, the concept of *al-khul'* in the fiqh literature on *al-usrah* opens up a space for ethical legitimacy for women's agency without having to deny the normative structure of sharia. Another example is the reinterpretation of *qiwāmah*, which shifts from structural hierarchy to moral and functional responsibility in the context of the modern family. Consequently, this unanticipated discovery substantiates the notion that intercultural discourse functions via a gradual, reflective, and internally validated process of *tafsīr mujtama'ī*.

The primary scholarly contribution of this paper is the development of a dialogue framework on Islamic family law that positions Islamic gender values as equal epistemic subjects in global legal discourse. This argument is constructed through a synthesis of Tariq Ramadan's Civilizational Dialogue Theory, Chandra Talpade Mohanty's Postcolonial Feminist Legal Theory, and Homi K. Bhabha's Theory of Cultural Translation in a rereading of *fiqh al-usrah*. This research offers a novel perspective on *uṣūl* instruments such as *al-istiḥsān*, *al-istiḥāb*, and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* by demonstrating their capacity to function as normatively legitimate mechanisms of cultural translation. This approach situates Islamic gender justice not as a reactive measure in response to the CRC or CEDAW, but rather as a system of legal ethics that is endowed with inherent rationality. Consequently, this research makes a significant contribution to the existing discourse on international family law by employing a dialogical approach that is sensitive to the plurality of civilizations.

The controversy in this study relates to the limited scope of the data, which still focuses on textual and normative analysis without in-depth empirical exploration across jurisdictions. This limitation is a methodological consequence of the research's decision to prioritize in-depth analysis of the legal framework and international legal frameworks. For

instance, this study has not systematically compared the implementation of Islamic family law in the Global South, which exhibits different configurations of *'urf* and social practices. Another example is the absence of quantitative analysis of cross-country family court decisions that could strengthen the comparative dimension. Consequently, further research is recommended to develop interdisciplinary and mixed-methods approaches to broaden the understanding of intercivilizational dialogue in Islamic family law.

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