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CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF HADITH ON THE FOUR CRITERIA IN CHOOSING A LIFE PARTNER (HADITH ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW)

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ABSTRACT :

The purpose of this writing is to examine the study of hadith on the criteria for choosing a partner in marriage, especially the four aspects, namely property, descent, beauty, and religion. The problem is raised through a critical analysis approach to hadiths related to Islamic family law. These hadiths are narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim and are often used as a normative basis in considering the choice of life partner. This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach. The primary data of this study was obtained from hadith books such as the works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim which were then critically analyzed on sanad and matan hadith, as well as contextual analysis to evaluate the level of authenticity and relevance of hadith in current family law. The results of the study show that the hadith has a strong sanad and matan that is in accordance with the principles of sharia, but its understanding and application in society depends on social and cultural construction. Thus, it is important to place this hadith in a balanced manner, namely prioritizing the religious aspect without ignoring the consideration of other social aspects. This paper is expected to contribute to the development of a more contextual study of hadith and Islamic family law.

Key words: : *Hadith, Marriage, Four Criteria, Family Law.*

Introduction

Hadiths in the field of Islamic family law are one of the main sources in forming rules on marriage that are included in the teachings of the Shari'a.¹ In this case, the hadith that is often used as a reference is a hadith that encourages a person to marry a woman based on four criteria, namely property, descent, beauty (appearance) and religion.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ لِمَاهُا وَحَسَبِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا

فَأَظْفَرُ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرَبَّتْ يَدَاكَ

¹ Herlina Hanum Harahap and Bonanda Japatani Siregar, "Analysis of the Purpose of Marriage According to Islamic Law and Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage," *Proceedings of the 2022 National Seminar on Service Results*, 2022.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) that he said: "A woman is married for four things, because of her wealth, because of her offspring, because of her beauty and because of her religion. So choose because of your religion, you will be lucky. HR. Al-Bukhari (5090) and Muslim (1466)

This hadith is narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslims who have an important role, because it does not only discuss matters related to the individual in choosing a life partner. But it also covers broader social aspects, such as family and community sustainability. The relevance of this hadith is increasingly important to study because in today's reality, the process of choosing a partner is often influenced by various social, economic, and cultural changes.² Marriage in the Islamic perspective is not only a bond between two people physically and emotionally, but also a social institution that plays an important role in shaping family structure, moral values, and civilized generations.³

In the Qur'an and hadith, marriage is considered a means of creating tranquility, affection, and mercy (sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah), as well as a tool to maintain the honor and purity of the individual. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in various hadiths emphasized that choosing a partner who is in line with religious and moral values is very important, because a spiritually strong household will produce a harmonious and highly moral society.⁴

One of the hadiths that is often used as a guideline in choosing a partner is a hadith that states: "A woman is married for four things: because of her wealth, her offspring, her beauty, and her religion. So choose a religious one, and you will be lucky" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith is the basis for consideration for the Muslim community in determining priorities and criteria for choosing a partner. However, the public's understanding of this hadith shows quite significant differences. Some take it literally and consider the four criteria as a sequence of priority. While there are also those who take the meaning that the religious aspect is the main basis, while the other three criteria are only complementary.⁵

² Achmad Asfi Burhanudin, "The Concept of Marriage Agreements in the Perspective of Legal Comparison," *El-Faqih : Journal of Islamic Thought and Law*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.29062/faqih.v5i2.69>.

³ Novaili Novaili, "The Da'wah Method of Islamic Religious Extension in Realizing the Sakinah Family for Prospective Married Couples at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA)," *RELIGIOUS COUNSELING: Journal of Islamic Counseling Guidance*, 2015.

⁴ , Hikmatullah, "The Model of a Harmonious Family in Islam," *Syaksia : Journal of Islamic Civil Law*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.37035/syakhisia.v23i1.6471>.

⁵ Jajak Mega Prakoso, Sri Wening, and Kristriyanto Kristriyanto, "Criteria for Choosing a Life Partner in the Formation of a Harmonious Family," *Knowledge: Journal of Innovation Research and Development Results*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.51878/knowledge.v3i3.2497>.

This phenomenon of differences in understanding is interesting to study, because it reflects how hadith is used as a moral and social guideline in the context of a society that continues to develop. Nowadays, many people prioritize wealth, offspring, and beauty as priorities in choosing a partner, while religious considerations are often a formality or addition.⁶ This shift in values shows the influence of materialistic culture and modern lifestyles that can influence the way we choose a partner, so it is important to review the hadith critically so that the meaning contained in it does not lead to deviations.⁷

In the scientific context, this research is included in the category of Islamic family law hadith studies because the hadith serves as a basis for consideration in the process of establishing a household in accordance with sharia. This research emphasizes the importance of a balanced understanding between aspects of hadith texts, such as the analysis of sanad and matan, and the social context in society. Therefore, this research is not only descriptive, but also analytical, by combining a textual study approach and a social studies approach to see how people understand, internalize⁸, and apply the teachings of hadith in daily life.

The sustainability of the meaning of hadith in modern society shows the flexibility and depth of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who were able to adapt to social dynamics without losing their core values. In addition, this hadith remains relevant as a living hadith, that is, a hadith that is continuously revived in the social practice of Muslims. This research aims to examine the factors that cause this hadith to survive, including how people interpret, teach and apply it in daily life, both in the context of choosing a partner and in building ideal Islamic family norms.

The urgency of this research is twofold. Academically, this study enriches the study of Islamic family law hadith and provides a critical perspective on the way people understand hadith. Practically, this research contributes to efforts to guide people to re-place religion as the top priority in choosing a partner, so that the household built is not only materially strong, but also spiritually and morally strong. In other words, this research is expected to be able to provide

⁶ Rizdan Askhabul Kahfi and CSA Teddy Lesmana, "A Review of Early Marriage According to the Marriage Law on Domestic Harmony," *Wara Sains Journal of Law and Human Rights*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.58812/jhhws.v2i01.192>.

⁷ Karimulloh Karimulloh, Ratih Arruum Listiyandini, and Chandradewi Kusristanti, "Pre-Marriage Counseling Program to Increase Knowledge about Islamic Marriage," *Axiology: Journal of Community Service*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.30651/aks.v4i2.2893>.

⁸ A Tribute to the Family, "A Tribute to the Family" *Al-Risalah*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.34005/alrisalah.v11i1.740>.

solutions to problems in the selection of partners which are often influenced by worldly factors alone, so that it is in line with the message of the Prophet Saw.⁹

Against this background, this study provides a critical perspective on the hadith of marrying women because of four criteria, as well as examining how society's understanding can be in line with the principles of Islamic family law. This is important to strengthen the idea that religious aspects should be the main basis in building a harmonious family based on Islamic values, so that the moral and legal messages contained in the hadith can be optimally implemented in modern life.¹⁰ Critical research on this hadith needs to be carried out with two main approaches, namely criticism of sanad and matan to check the validity of history, and contextual analysis to explore the meaning and relevance of hadith in changing social situations. With this method, hadith is not only understood normatively and textually, but also dynamically in accordance with the goals of sharia.¹¹

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach based on literature studies with a focus on the analysis of Islamic family law hadiths, especially hadiths that explain the four criteria in marrying a woman.¹² The primary data used are hadiths narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from various relevant literature, such as hadith sharia books, works by fiqh scholars, tafsir literature, and contemporary academic studies that discuss Islamic family law. The analysis is carried out in two main stages. The first stage is sanad criticism, which is the process of tracing the narration path of the hadith, evaluating the quality of the narrator, and measuring the consistency of the overall history with the standard of *jaric knowledge h wa ta'dil*. Sanad criticism aims to ensure the authenticity of the hadith and affirm its level of validity. The second stage is matan criticism, which focuses on analyzing the content of the hadith text, the consistency of the editorial with the general principles of sharia.¹³

With this method, researchers can study in depth various relevant writing sources, ranging from classic hadith books, family fiqh literature, academic journals, to the latest scientific articles.

⁹ Sunari Sunari, Ratih Dwi Pangestu, and Dedy Muharman, "Criteria for Living Couples in Marriage According to Islamic Teachings to Be Able to Realize the Sakinah Mawadah Warahmah Family," *Syntax Literate; Indonesian Scientific Journal*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-literate.v8i12.14152>.

¹⁰ Yudi Mashudi, M Aris Akin, and Hendrik Susila, "The Role of Premarital Guidance in Forming a Harmonious Family," *El 'Aailah: Journal of Family Law Studies*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.59270/aailah.v1i1.71>.

¹¹ Dwi Darsa Suryantoro and Ainur Rofiq, "Nikah in the View of Islamic Law," *Ahsana Media*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.31102/ahsanamedia.7.02.2021.38-45>.

¹² Depri Liber Sonata, "Normative and Empirical Legal Research Methods: Distinctive Characteristics of Legal Research Methods," *Fiat Justisia: Journal of Legal Sciences*, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.25041/fiatjustisia.v8no1.283>.

¹³ M. Hum Dr. Ishaq, S.H., *Legal Research Methods and Writing Thesis, Thesis, and Dissertation*, Cv. Alfabeta, Bandung, 2020.

This literature approach allows research to be conducted in a structured manner without the need to conduct surveys in the field, but still obtain valid and reliable data. This research is qualitative-descriptive, with a focus on understanding the social context and meaning in certain phenomena. The researcher not only describes the facts, but also analyzes people's perceptions, attitudes, and practices in choosing a partner based on four criteria, namely wealth, descent, beauty, and religion. This qualitative approach allows for a deeper analysis of changing values and priorities in modern society.¹⁴

The object of the research includes the community's understanding of the hadith and its application in daily life. The researcher studies how society assesses the importance of each criterion, how important the role of religion is as the main consideration, and the social, cultural, and religious factors that influence the interpretation of society. To collect data, the researcher conducted a literature review with several steps, namely identifying relevant sources, selecting information based on its credibility and relevance, and organizing the data according to the theme studied. Data sources include classic and contemporary hadith books, family fiqh books, journal articles, and previous research that discusses hadith and related social practices.

Data analysis is carried out through content analysis and contextual approaches. The researcher studied the hadith text in depth, compared it with the interpretation of society, and evaluated the suitability between Islamic teachings and social practices. The purpose of this analysis is to provide a comprehensive picture of how the values of hadith remain relevant in modern life, as well as how society is able to balance worldly and ukhrawi considerations in choosing a life partner. The results of this method are expected to provide a more critical, scientific and practical understanding of the role of hadith in modern life.

This result is also expected to be the basis for strengthening Islamic family practices that are harmonious and based on religious values. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research lies in the text of the hadith and the way the community understands the hadith, not on the collection of data directly in the field. Its main objective is to analyze in depth the meaning, context, and relevance of the hadith "tunkahu al-mar'ah li arba'in" (women are married for four things) from the perspective of Islamic family law, as well as to trace how societies shape and develop their understanding of the hadith.

The researcher researched various references, both in the form of classic books, scientific articles, journals, and related previous research. The data obtained were then categorized based on

¹⁴ Dimas Assyakurrohim et al., "Case Study Methods in Qualitative Research," *Journal of Science and Computer Education*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.47709/jpsk.v3i01.1951>.

themes, such as understanding the hadith, the socio-cultural context of the community, and relevance in the context of Islamic family law. Data processing uses content analysis and critical analysis approaches. Content analysis is used to understand the textual structure of the meaning of the hadith, including sanad, matan, and the meaning of the hadith utterance. Meanwhile, critical analysis is used to interpret the moral message of hadith in the social context of modern society, so that a relationship is found between the normative text of hadith and real-life practice. To ensure the credibility of the data, the researcher applied source triangulation, which is comparing various opinions of scholars and hadith interpretations from various eras, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.¹⁵

With this approach, the research is expected to fully illustrate how the hadith on the four criteria for women to be married is understood, appreciated, and applied by society within the framework of Islamic family law. To increase the objectivity of the research results, the content analysis method is applied to the hadith text and interpretation of the scholars. The data obtained were then analyzed descriptively and analytically and compared with modern social phenomena related to the practice of choosing a life partner.¹⁶ With this approach, it is hoped that this research will be able to produce a comprehensive understanding of the position of the hadith, both as a normative text and as an ethical guideline that can be applied in the dynamics of Islamic family law today.

Result

This research explores the meaning of the hadith "Women are married because of four things, their property, their descendants, their beauty, and their religion. So choose because of his religion so that you may be lucky." (HR. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) by critically analyzing the text and seeing its relevance in the lens of Islamic family law today. The data used came from literature studies and surveys on Muslim people's perceptions of the criteria for choosing a partner in the context of modern society.¹⁷

The results of this study show that hadith that discusses the criteria for choosing a partner in marriage, namely property, descent, beauty, and religion, plays an important role in the treasure of Islamic family law hadith. By analyzing various primary and secondary sources in the literature,

¹⁵ Muhammad Abdul Kadir, "Normative Law Research Methods and Empirical Law: Distinctive Characteristics of Research Methods," *Bandung : PT. Image of Aditya Bakti.*, 2015.

¹⁶ Muhammad rizal Pahkeviannur, "Qualitative Research: Qualitative Research Methods," *Jurnal EQUILIBRIUM*, 2022.

¹⁷ Irmalia Noviani et al., "Analysis Marital Quality and Parenting Style in Adolescence Marriage Family," *Journal of Family Sciences*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.29244/jfs.v8i1.42863>.

this hadith is not only seen as a normative text, but is also considered as part of the hadith that remains relevant and influential in the mindset and social practices of the community, as explained by M. Rofiq.

In the hadith literature, scholars agree that the essence of this hadith message is the importance of making the religious aspect a top priority in choosing a life companion. However, as Islamic thought has developed throughout history, this hadith has varied in its interpretation. In classical fiqh, such as in the *Syarh Saheeh Muslim* by an-Nawawi, the moral and spiritual dimensions of this hadith are more emphasized. Meanwhile, in the modern context, this hadith is more interpreted as an effort to maintain a balance between the needs of this world and the hereafter in forming a harmonious family.

The concept of *living hadith* proposed by M. Rofiq shows that the hadith remains relevant in various forms, such as advice in the context of marriage, sermon materials, and discourse in Islamic family education. Even though social conditions continue to change over time, the values contained in this hadith are still used as an ideal reference in building a family life. This research shows that hadith that discusses marrying a woman based on four criteria, namely property, descent, beauty, and religion plays a very important role in the discussion of Islamic family law. From the point of view of sanad, this hadith is narrated by four main hadith books, namely Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, and An-Nasa'i with relatively similar editorials. Its existence in these books shows a high level of validity.¹⁸

The public's understanding of the hadith about marrying a woman based on four criteria still varies and is often influenced by social, cultural, and religious knowledge factors. Some people understand the hadith directly, considering beauty and social status as the main reference in choosing a partner. This kind of view generally arises among urban people who are exposed to modern and materialistic values. On the other hand, people who have a more solid basis in religious education tend to understand this hadith contextually, by placing the religious aspect as the most important thing, in accordance with the emphasis given by the Prophet.¹⁹

The study also found that there are still many people who understand the hadith as a "free choice" that refers to four criteria without realizing that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) actually emphasized norms that prioritize religious factors. In practice, many

¹⁸ Sarkowi et al., "Disorientation of Household Harmonization in Muslim Families in the Digital Age," *Medina-Te: Journal of Islamic Studies* 18, no. 2 (2022): 138–53, <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/medinate>.

¹⁹ Irnadia Andriani and Ihsan Mz, "The Concept of Qana'ah in Realizing a Harmonious Family from the Perspective of the Qur'an," *REASON: Journal of Islamic Civilization and Thought*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v3i1.1291>.

marriages are built on worldly considerations such as beauty or wealth, but are unable to survive because they are not based on the values of faith and fidelity. This shows that there is a gap between the normative understanding of hadith and the social reality of Muslim society today. In addition, the results of the study also show that religious leaders and educational institutions play an important role in shaping the public's perception of this hadith.²⁰ In some areas, recitation activities, Friday sermons, and Islamic family studies have begun to emphasize the importance of religious criteria in choosing a partner. However, these efforts are not even and still face obstacles to the lack of Islamic literacy among the younger generation.

The study of criteria for choosing a life partner is an important part of Islamic family law, because marriage is not only related to emotional aspects, but also involves social, moral, and spiritual dimensions. One of the hadiths that is often used as a basis for reference is the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad which mentions four main criteria in choosing a partner, namely religion, morals, property and descent. Critical analysis of this hadith requires a scientific approach that combines the methodology of hadith criticism (*dirayah al-hadith*) and the study of *fiqh al-ahwal al-syakhsiyah*.²¹

1. Religious criteria

The hadith emphasizes the importance of conformity in faith as the main factor. This is in line with the *fiqh* principle that the purpose of marriage in Islam is to build a stable family. Scientific research shows that couples who share the same religious values tend to have a better level of equality in the family, as religious norms become a shared guideline in decision-making and conflict resolution. However, the interpretation of "religion" can be subjective, depending on a particular understanding or school, so specific criteria such as worship practices, morals, and religious knowledge are needed as indicators.

2. Beauty of morality or morality of a couple

The hadith emphasizes that a good personality and character can support a harmonious home life. Scientifically, social psychology research shows that character suitability, patience, and communication skills contribute significantly to the sustainability of marriages. The analysis of hadith from the point of view of *sanad* and *matan* strengthens

²⁰ Tri Maryani, Nita Sri Handayani, and Annisa Julianti, "A Study on Unmarried Working Women in Choosing a Life Partner," *Arjwa: Journal of Psychology*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.35760/arjwa.2024.v3i1.9873>.

²¹ Sunari, Pangestu, and Muharman, "Criteria for Living Couples in Marriage According to Islamic Teachings to Be Able to Realize the Sakinah Mawadah Warahmah Family."

the position of morality as a criterion, because many saheeh narrations emphasize that good behavior is more valuable than wealth or offspring.

3. Possessions

One of the criteria in choosing a life partner, although in order of priority, wealth is not the main thing. In the context of family law, property is seen as a factor that supports household economic stability. Fiqh studies emphasize that financial ability can reduce economic conflicts, but it does not guarantee happiness. Scientific criticism highlights the dangers of wealth being given too much attention, as it can obscure the main purpose of marriage in Islam, which is to create a *sakinah* family.

4. Ancestry or social status

In the perspective of classical fiqh, this factor has to do with social viability and relationships with extended families, which can affect social networks and support within the family. However, contemporary studies emphasize that descent should not be the primary criterion, as social relevance and status can change with time and cultural context.

From the perspective of Islamic family law, this hadith is the basis for assessing the feasibility of a prospective spouse. A proper understanding of this hadith can be the foundation for building a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. When religious values are prioritized, the marriage relationship will be more stable and harmonious because it is based on piety, not just physical or material interests.²² Thus, the results of this study confirm the importance of revitalizing the understanding of hadith through Islamic education, premarital guidance, and *da'wah* that touches on moral and spiritual aspects. A thorough understanding will restore the function of the hadith as a guide to life that brings blessings, not just as a normative teaching that is memorized without being practiced.

Discussion

A critical analysis of this hadith shows that factors such as wealth, descent, and beauty are not completely ignored. Islam still makes room for these factors as long as it does not become the main goal that defeats religious values. Thus, this hadith is not only prescriptive, but also realistic because it recognizes the natural tendency of humans to choose a partner while providing direction so that spiritual orientation becomes the main basis. The findings of the study also show that there are various interpretations from classical to contemporary scholars. Classical scholars tend to

²² Arviatinnisa Bahriatul Fakistania and Ramdan Fawzi, "Analysis of Choosing a Prospective Partner according to Shaykh Muhammad At-Rihami in the Book of *Qurrat Al-'Uyun*," *Islamic Family Law Research Journal*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.29313/jrhki.v1i2.432>.

emphasize the normative aspect by viewing religion as an absolute requirement, while some contemporary scholars provide contextual interpretations by emphasizing the importance of a balance between religious factors and social and economic factors in building a family. This shows that this hadith does not only apply in the context of the text, but also provides room for *ijtihad* in responding to the needs of the times.²³

Applicatively, this study emphasizes that the hadith is relevant in building an Islamic family legal framework that is oriented towards domestic resilience. Families built on the basis of religion tend to be better able to create harmony, peace, and sustainability. On the other hand, if religious factors are ignored, there can be the potential for conflict and increased household rifts even if other factors are met. Thus, this hadith has a significant contribution to the development of Islamic family law thought, especially in setting the ideal standard of marriage based on sharia values.²⁴ In the context of the research question, these findings prove that the four-criteria hadith of women is still relevant in Islamic family law today. This hadith provides an ethical framework that leads Muslims not to be trapped in mere materialistic considerations. The religious aspect in this hadith is a symbol of integration between the values of the world and the value of the hereafter. Thus, the interpretation of this hadith is in accordance with the principles of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, especially in terms of religious maintenance (*hifẓ al-dīn*) and the maintenance of offspring (*hifẓ al-nasl*).²⁵

Some respondents, especially those who are young and highly educated, tend to prioritize beauty and economic stability in choosing a partner. They stated that in the midst of the modern era, appearance factors and economic conditions are considered relevant to meet the needs of life practically. This phenomenon shows a change in values due to the influence of popular culture, social media, and materialistic views on the concept of marriage.²⁶ However, most of them still consider religion to be an ideal value that should be the main basis in building a marriage. The spiritual and religious values contained in this hadith are the main foundation in realizing a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

In the context of modern society, the hadith that says that a person can marry a woman because of four things is often only partially taken for granted. Many people still prioritize

²³ Hendra Karunia Agustine and Yadi Supriyadi, "A Review of Munakahat Fiqh on Generation Z's View of Kafa'ah in Marriage," *Al Mashalih - Journal of Islamic Law*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.59270/mashalih.v4i1.173>.

²⁴ Ridwan Angga Januario, Fadil Sj, and Moh. Thoriquddin, "The Essence and Purpose of Marriage in the Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Eras," *Al-Ijtima'iyyah Journal*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.22373/al-ijtima'iyyah.v8i1.11007>.

²⁵ Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, "Criteria for Choosing a Life Partner for Millennial Children from the Perspective of Islamic Law," *AGAI*, 2019.

²⁶ Irman Irman et al., "The Effectiveness Of Islamic Premarriage Counseling To Readiness For Household Life," *Alfuad: Journal of Social Religion*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.31958/jsk.v5i2.4730>.

judgment from the physical side and social position, while the religious aspect, which is actually the main basis, is often overlooked.²⁷ This phenomenon proves the shift in value from the meaning of hadith which was originally normative to a more materialistic understanding. In this hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) emphasized, "So choose a religious one, and you will be lucky." This sentence shows that religion is the main foundation in building a harmonious family.²⁸

Historically, this hadith appeared during the time of the Arab society who saw marriage as a form of designation of social status and the glory of the tribe. However, the Prophet Saw. directs this view so that Muslims view marriage not only as a social or economic bond, but as a worship that has spiritual and moral elements. Therefore, it is important to conduct a critical analysis of this hadith to understand the socio-cultural context when the hadith came down (asbabul wurud), as well as how its message is still relevant and can be applied in today's life.²⁹ In Islamic family law, this hadith is the basis for determining the ideal criteria in choosing a life partner. The prospective husband or wife should not only prioritize the physical aspect, but also faith, morals, and piety that will support domestic harmony.

From the point of view of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah, choosing a religious partner aims to preserve religion (ḥifẓ al-dīn) and offspring (ḥifẓ al-nasl).³⁰ In addition, the reality on the ground shows that some people understand the hadith only as an encouragement to choose a partner according to personal taste, not as a moral and spiritual guideline. In fact, this hadith conveys a deep ethical message about the importance of making religion the basis of domestic life. Improper understanding can cause imbalances in the relationship between husband and wife, such as conflicts due to differences in values and life goals. Therefore, religious guidance and education are needed that emphasize that marriage is not only the union of two individuals, but also two visions in achieving happiness in accordance with the pleasure of Allah.³¹

The sentence *فَأَظْفَرُ بِدَاتِ الدِّينِ* is the main essence of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This sentence not only serves as the conclusion of the hadith,

²⁷ Muhammad Roni and M. Anzaikhan, "The Formation of the Shaleh Family in Islamic Communication: A Comparative Study of the Interpretation of the Qur'an," *Al-Hikmah Media Da'wah, Communication, Social and Cultural*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.32505/hikmah.v12i1.2825>.

²⁸ Indah Arnilah Nur, "The Role of Fiqh and the Principles of Worship in Islam," *Al-Mirah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.33487/al-mirah.v1i2.346>.

²⁹ Nurun Najwah, "Criteria for Choosing a Life Partner" *Hermeneutics Study of Hadith*, 2016.

³⁰ Nurun Najwah, "Criteria for Choosing a Life Partner (Hadith Hermeneutics Study)," *Journal of the Study of the Sciences of the Qur'an and Hadith*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2016.1701-05>.

³¹ Rossa Roudhatul Jannah, Enoh, and HU. Saepudin ASM, "Criteria for Choosing a Life Partner According to the Hadith Narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari and Its Implications for Premarital Education," *Islamic Religious Education Research Journal*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.29313/jrpai.v1i1.159>.

but more than that, it is a command that affirms the meaning and priority in choosing a partner. The word **فَاطْفُرْ** comes from the word **zafara** which means to achieve victory or achieve something valuable with effort. Thus, the message in this sentence is not just "choose", but "fight until you succeed in" a partner who has high religious values. This word suggests that religion should be a top priority, higher than other aspects that are usually taken into consideration.

This emphasis arose after the Prophet Saw mentioned three things, namely wealth, beauty, and offspring which are generally attractive to humans. However, in this hadith, the Prophet (saw) actually directed the attention of his people that religion is the last point mentioned, but it is the most important thing to achieve. With the sentence **فَاطْفُرْ بِدَاتِ الدِّينِ** the Prophet Saw emphasized that righteousness is a value that should not be defeated by the allure of the world, because religion is the foundation that determines the direction of domestic life. A religiously strong couple is not only the one who carries out worship, but also the one who makes religion a source of morality, emotional balance and social ethics.³²

Religion regulates how we communicate, resolve differences, manage conflicts, and maintain rights and obligations between husband and wife. Thus, the message of **فَاطْفُرْ بِدَاتِ الدِّينِ** contains the meaning that success in marriage does not depend on material or lineage, but on the similarity of spiritual values and commitment to worship Allah. This sentence also shows that choosing a religious partner is a form of long-term investment. Wealth can diminish, beauty can fade, social status can also change over time, but religion remains a light that gives strength when the test comes.

Families based on religion tend to be more able to take care of *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah*. The strongest message, then, of this sentence is that choosing a partner for the sake of religion is not just idealistic advice, but a rational decision in building a solid and sustainable home life. Thus, **فَاطْفُرْ بِدَاتِ الدِّينِ** is an instruction that contains the spirit of optimism of victory, who puts religion first, will find greater happiness than what is pursued. A faith-based partner is not only a life partner, but also a friend in obedience, an encouragement in goodness and a guide to the pleasure of Allah. That is the true victory that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) meant by the right choice.³³

³² Nurhanisah Hadigunawan et al., "Kafaah: The Impact of Social Differences on Household Well-Being," *Journal of Fatwa Management and Research*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.33102/jfatwa.vol26no2.424>.

³³ Arviatinnisa Bahriatul Fakistania and Ramdan Fawzi, "Analysis of Choosing a Prospective Partner according to Shaykh Muhammad At-Rihami in the Book of Qurrat Al-'Uyun."

By placing religious criteria as a priority, it is hoped that a family that respects each other, has good morals, and is able to face social changes without losing Islamic values. This understanding is the core of the application of hadith in the life of modern society. Therefore, the public's understanding of this hadith needs to continue to be straightened out through comprehensive Islamic education. Da'wah efforts and Islamic family education must emphasize the importance of spiritual values in building a household. If the community understands this hadith in its entirety, then marriage is no longer considered a place to fulfill worldly desires, but a means of worship and the formation of a generation with noble character.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the hadith about marrying a woman based on four criteria has a moral and legal message that is very important in forming a family according to Islamic teachings. This hadith not only provides guidance in choosing a life partner, but also instills the value that religion must be the main foundation in building a household. Criteria such as wealth, descent, and beauty may be considered, but they must still be governed by religious values so that marriage is not only worldly, but also has a ukhrawi purpose.

The public's understanding of this hadith still varies. Some people understand textually and focus only on outward things, while others are able to grasp the deeper meaning, which is that religion plays a major role in determining the blessings of the household. When religion is used as the basis of marriage, it will provide peace, honor, and happiness based on faith. However, if the worldly aspect is prioritized, problems such as disharmony, divorce, or shifting family values often arise. From the point of view of Islamic family law, this hadith teaches the principle of prudence and moral responsibility before deciding to marry.

By understanding the hadith contextually and critically, people will realize that the main purpose of marriage is not only to meet biological or social needs, but to form a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *Rahmah*. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed in Islamic education and da'wah so that the public truly understands this hadith in its entirety. The right understanding will lead Muslims to a marriage that has the value of worship, is balanced between the needs of the world and the hereafter, and becomes a means to give birth to a generation of believers and noble character according to the teachings of the Prophet Saw. This shows that the hadith discusses four criteria in choosing a partner in marriage, namely property, offspring, beauty, and religion. Emphasizing the importance of religious aspects as the main basis in choosing a life partner.

The results of this study show that the understanding of the hadith is not only in the form of textual interpretation, but also contextual and relevant to social developments and community needs. Seen in terms of sanad and matan, this hadith has quite strong power and can be a guideline in marriage etiquette according to Islamic teachings. However, the limitation of this study is that the focus of the analysis is still limited to normative hadiths without involving the study of social practices in the present. For further research, it is recommended to explore further the application of this hadith in the modern context, including the role of religiosity values in the dynamics of the Muslim family in the midst of the challenges of the globalization era.

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