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Integrating Islamic Values And Minangkabau Customs In Premarital Preparation Towards The Ideal Couple Model

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Abstract

This study aims to develop an integrative conceptual model of premarital preparation that combines Islamic values and Minangkabau customs as a multidimensional framework for shaping the ideal couple. Employing a qualitative approach through a systematic literature review of publications indexed in Scopus, Science Direct, and Springer, the analysis was conducted using thematic synthesis to identify the primary dimensions of marital readiness. The findings reveal that the philosophy of adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah provides an integrative foundation that synergizes three main dimensions: spiritual readiness grounded in religiosity and moral values, psychological readiness encompassing communication and conflict resolution, and socio-cultural readiness based on kinship systems and Minangkabau customary norms. These three dimensions interact dynamically to form a construct of the ideal couple that is adaptive and sustainable. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a premarital preparation model that simultaneously integrates religious, psychological, and local cultural perspectives, bridging the gap between global individualistic approaches and the contextual needs of non-Western societies. Theoretically, this study enriches Islamic family studies grounded in local wisdom, while practically providing a foundation for the development of premarital education programs that are

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contextual, integrative, and applicable.

Keywords: Pre-Marital Preparation; Minangkabau Customs; Cultural Integration; Marriage Readiness; Ideal Partner.

INTRODUCTION

Premarital preparation constitutes a critical phase in the establishment of a stable, harmonious, and resilient family. From an Islamic perspective, marriage is not merely regarded as a legal bond between two individuals but also as a form of worship ('ibadah ghair mahdhah) encompassing spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. (Al-Qaradawi, 2005) Islamic marriage demands comprehensive readiness, including emotional maturity, interpersonal communication skills, and an understanding of the rights and obligations of spouses as prescribed in the Qur'an and Sunnah. (Nasr, 2012)

The primary objective is the attainment of a sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah family (QS. Ar-Rum: 21), characterized by a harmonious relationship grounded in spiritual commitment. Empirical studies reinforce this notion, demonstrating a positive correlation between religiosity and marital quality and stability, whereby religious individuals exhibit stronger commitment, enhanced conflict resolution abilities, and higher marital satisfaction. (Mahoney et al., 2001) Consequently, the premarital process serves as a strategic platform for internalizing faith-based values and an understanding of family jurisprudence (fiqh al-usrah) as the foundation for an ideal family. (Fincham & Beach, 2011)

Simultaneously, within the context of Minangkabau society, marriage functions as a social institution inseparable from the distinctive matrilineal kinship system. This system positions women at the center of lineage and inheritance, while men assume social roles as mamak, bearing responsibility for the extended family. (Navis, 1984) This structure generates unique family relational dynamics, wherein marriage transcends individual concerns to become a social institution involving the broader community, manifested in customary practices such as maresek, maminang, and batimbang tando (Blackwood, 2000).

Beyond mere rituals, Minangkabau customs are imbued with philosophical values regulating the balance between individuals, family, and society, and incorporate social control mechanisms based on familial deliberation to maintain household stability.The distinctiveness of the Minangkabau community lies in the profound integration between Islam and customary law, as reflected in the philosophy of "adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah". This philosophy

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normatively asserts that customary practices must be based on Islamic law, which in turn is derived from the Qur'an, demonstrating a harmonious relationship between religion and culture in shaping social order, including matrimonial practices (Abdullah, 1966). This dynamic interaction between Islam and local culture forms part of the indigenization process of Islam in Indonesia, (Bowen, 2003) wherein universal Islamic values are articulated through local cultural frameworks without compromising their normative essence (Geertz, 1960).

Nonetheless, the ideal integration faces significant challenges due to the forces of modernization and globalization. Social changes have generated dissonance between traditional values and contemporary practices, leading to a weakening of the internalization of both Islamic and customary values, particularly in the premarital preparation stage (Azra, 2013). This phenomenon is evidenced by an increase in domestic conflicts, diminished psychological readiness among couples, (UNICEF, 2021) and shifts in family institution values (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). Amid the urgent need to equip couples adequately, global studies recognize premarital education as a critical intervention that effectively enhances communication skills (Stanley et al., 2006), conflict management, and reduces divorce rates (Markman & Rhoades, 2010). However, most existing models predominantly adopt Western approaches focused on psychological and interpersonal aspects, with relatively limited attention to religious dimensions and local cultural contexts (Halford et al., 2003).

This gap creates a disparity in application within non-Western societies such as Indonesia, which is characterized by rich cultural diversity and religious values. Ironically, research systematically integrating Islamic and Minangkabau customary values within the premarital preparation context remains scarce. Existing studies tend to address these dimensions separately, without proposing a conceptual model that bridges religious, psychological, and socio-cultural aspects in a manner contextualized to contemporary Minangkabau society.Based on this gap, the present study aims to develop an integrative premarital preparation model that systematically incorporates Islamic values and Minangkabau cultural traditions. This model is designed to encompass three main dimensions: (1) the religious dimension, emphasizing the understanding of Islamic teachings and spiritual readiness; (2) the psychological dimension, which includes emotional maturity, communication, and conflict resolution; and (3) the socio-cultural dimension, rooted in Minangkabau local wisdom. Accordingly, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic family studies grounded in local wisdom, as well as practically in designing more contextual and applicable premarital education programs for the community.

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METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach as the primary research design to identify, evaluate, and synthesize various empirical and conceptual findings related to the integration of Islamic values and Minangkabau customs in premarital preparation (Tranfield et al., 2003). The SLR approach is selected due to its capability to provide a comprehensive mapping of developments within a specific field of study while producing a systematic, transparent, and replicable evidence-based synthesis (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). To ensure methodological rigor, the review process in this study adheres to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, encompassing four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion of literature (Page et al., 2021).

The data sources for this study were obtained from three internationally reputable scientific databases: Scopus, Science Direct, and Springer Link. These databases were deliberately selected due to their extensive multidisciplinary coverage and their high reputation for indexing quality publications that have undergone rigorous peer review processes. The literature search was conducted by designing a retrieval strategy that combined keyword combinations with Boolean operators to capture relevant articles accurately and efficiently. The keyword combinations employed included “premarital education” OR “marital preparation” to gather literature within the domain of premarital education; “Islamic family” OR “Islamic marriage” to capture studies from the perspective of Islamic family dynamics; “Minangkabau” OR “matrilineal society” to obtain research related to the socio-cultural context under focus; and “local wisdom” AND “marriage” to identify discourse on the integration of local wisdom in marriage practices (Wohlin, 2014).

To maintain focus and ensure that only literature of high quality and relevance is analyzed, this study establishes a strict set of inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria consist of five primary requirements. First, the articles analyzed must have undergone a peer-review process as a guarantee of academic quality. Second, the research topic must be directly related to marriage, Islamic family, premarital education, or cultural integration within the family context. Third, the publication period is restricted to a specific timeframe, chosen to capture contemporary discourse developments while accommodating relevant current social dynamics aligned with the research focus. Fourth, articles must be written in either English or Indonesian, the two languages that enable balanced access to both international and national literature. Fifth, only articles available in full-text format are included to allow for comprehensive and thorough data extraction. Conversely, non-academic articles such as opinion columns, editorials, or popular reports are

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excluded from the sample.

The literature selection procedure was conducted in a phased manner following the established PRISMA framework. The initial phase, referred to as the identification stage, involved compiling all articles retrieved from searches across three databases into a single temporary database. The first step was to identify and remove all duplicates to ensure that each article was counted only once. Upon completion of deduplication, the screening phase was carried out by reviewing the titles and abstracts of each article to perform an initial relevance assessment. Articles whose titles and abstracts did not demonstrate a clear connection to the research topic were excluded at this stage.

Subsequently, articles that passed the screening phase proceeded to the eligibility assessment, during which a thorough full-text review of each article was conducted. This review aimed to definitively confirm whether the content of each article met all predetermined inclusion criteria. For articles that advanced to the final stage, systematic data extraction was performed, encompassing five key informational components: bibliographic details, research objectives, methodological approaches employed, principal findings, and the implications of these findings for premarital preparation and the integration of religious and cultural values. The entire procedure was executed under strict protocols to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the resulting data (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

The analysis of the extracted data was conducted using a thematic synthesis approach, a method specifically developed to identify, categorize, and integrate key themes emerging from a diverse range of reviewed literature (Thomas & Harden, 2008). This analytical process proceeded through three iterative stages of coding. The first stage, open coding, involved the identification and labeling of key concepts arising from each study under analysis. At this stage, relevant data fragments were assigned preliminary conceptual labels without premature grouping. The second stage, axial coding, consisted of organizing the previously identified concepts into broader thematic categories with meaningful connections. Here, the relationships among concepts were woven into a more structured framework of understanding. The third stage, selective coding, represented a higher-level integration phase wherein the established thematic categories were synthesized into coherent and interrelated conceptual dimensions.

To enhance the credibility and robustness of the findings, several complementary validation strategies were employed. The first strategy ensured full transparency throughout the literature selection process, manifested through detailed documentation of the PRISMA flow, allowing each step to be traceable and subject to audit by other researchers. The second strategy

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involved stringent selection criteria, including only literature sourced from reputable databases and subjected to peer review for inclusion in the analysis. The third strategy entailed the application of conceptual triangulation, a practice of comparing and confronting diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical findings from various literatures to achieve a more comprehensive, in-depth understanding and to mitigate the risk of single-interpretation bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Spiritual Readiness

The synthesis of literature consistently indicates that spiritual readiness constitutes the most fundamental foundation for establishing a marriage that is not only structurally stable but also existentially meaningful within the Islamic perspective. This readiness transcends a mere abstract mental state; it is a multidimensional construct encompassing three interrelated core aspects. First, the aspect of understanding religious teachings (religious knowledge), specifically mastery of family jurisprudence (fiqh al-usrah), which includes knowledge of the pillars and conditions of marriage, the rights and obligations of spouses, the concept of provision (nafqah), and the shariah regulations governing domestic relations. Second, the aspect of consistency in religious practice (religious practice), reflecting the individual's level of spiritual commitment and discipline, such as the performance of salat, fasting, Qur'anic recitation (tilawah), and other sunnah practices that shape character and self-control. Third, the internalization of Islamic moral values (akhlāq) such as responsibility (amānah), honesty (ṣidq), patience (ṣabr), compassion (raḥmah), and justice ('afw), which serve as ethical pillars in spousal interactions and household management. Numerous empirical studies have unequivocally confirmed that religiosity serves as a significant protective factor against domestic conflict and divorce. Mahoney et al. (2001), in their comprehensive investigation into the role of religiosity within marriage, found that couples exhibiting high levels of religiosity tend to perceive marriage as a sacred institution with transcendent purposes, rather than merely a social contract subject to dissolution at will. (Mahoney et al., 2001)

This perception of sanctity directly contributes to the reinforcement of long-term commitment and resilience in the face of marital stress. Furthermore, Fincham et al. (2011) demonstrated that the spiritual dimension functions as a moral anchor, shaping prosocial behavior patterns, self-regulation, and ethical decision-making in the resolution of domestic conflicts. Individuals with a mature religious orientation exhibit greater self-regulatory capacities,

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higher tendencies toward forgiveness, and an enhanced ability to prevent the escalation of destructive conflicts that could undermine the spousal relationship. In this context, spiritual readiness is not merely normative but operational, as it directly influences the cognitive frameworks, attitudes, and relational behaviors of couples in daily life.

Moreover, various premarital education literatures indicate that faith-based guidance programs are effective in enhancing couples' preparedness to understand their rights and responsibilities within the framework of religious law. Al-Qaradawi (2005) emphasizes that the Islamic approach to premarital education aims not only to provide legal information but also to cultivate spiritual awareness that underpins all aspects of marital life. Spiritual readiness thus serves a dual function: as an ethical foundation that offers value orientation and marital purpose, and as a regulatory framework that directs couples' behavior in alignment with divine principles. These findings affirm the centrality of the spiritual dimension as a non-negotiable element in the construction of the ideal couple model proposed in this study. (Al-Qaradawi, 2005)

Islamic values serve as a normative foundation and an existential basis that shape what is referred to as an individual's spiritual readiness prior to entering the institution of marriage. Operationally, this dimension encompasses three interrelated domains. The first is the cognitive domain, reflected in a profound understanding of religious teachings, particularly those related to marital jurisprudence, family law, and the ethics governing spousal relationships. The second domain concerns behavior, manifested through the consistency and quality of religious practices such as prayer, fasting, communal supplication, and other voluntary acts of worship that cultivate spiritual discipline and inner tranquility. The third domain is affective and moral, evident in the internalization of noble ethical values such as responsibility (amānah), justice ('afw), compassion (raḥmah), patience (ṣabr), and forgiveness ('afw). From the perspective of contemporary religiosity theory, religious values are not merely metaphysical beliefs but function as a system of meaning that provides an interpretative framework for life experiences, guides individual behavior in decision-making, and strengthens commitment and resilience in sustaining long-term relationships characterized by challenges (Fincham & Beach, 2011). Thus, the underlying proposition is that the greater the degree of internalization of Islamic values within an individual, the stronger and more mature the spiritual readiness to engage in marital life consciously oriented toward achieving the Qur'anic vision of sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah.

Psychological Readiness

The dimension of psychological readiness emerges as a critical factor directly influencing

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the quality of interactions and relational dynamics between partners in marital life. Based on a thematic synthesis of various literatures, psychological readiness is conceptualized as comprising three interrelated essential components. First, effective interpersonal communication skills, which include the ability to express thoughts and feelings assertively yet empathetically, active listening skills, and the capacity to interpret both verbal and nonverbal cues from one's partner. Second, emotional regulation, defined as the individual's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and express emotions adaptively in stressful situations, thereby preventing destructive impulsive reactions such as destructive anger, excessive defensiveness, or emotional withdrawal. Third, conflict resolution skills, referring to the partners' ability to address disagreements constructively, seek mutually satisfying solutions, and manage disputes without undermining the foundation of respect and affection.

Research within the field of family psychology consistently supports the significance of this dimension. Markman et al. (2010), through their extensive longitudinal study on the effectiveness of the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP), demonstrated that training in communication and conflict management skills significantly improves relationship quality, reduces the risk of divorce, and enhances marital satisfaction over the long term. Couples equipped with healthy communication skills tend to establish positive interaction patterns that serve as buffers during crises. (Markman & Rhoades, 2010) Similarly, Gottman and Silver (1999), through their well-known observational research, identified emotional regulation ability as a primary predictor of marital stability. Couples capable of managing negative emotions such as anger, disappointment, and frustration without verbally or psychologically harming their partners have a greater likelihood of maintaining a healthy and enduring relationship. (Gottman & Silver, 1999)

Conversely, communication patterns characterized by sharp criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and withdrawal the so-called "four horsemen" serve as strong indicators of relational dysfunction and divorce.Although the effectiveness of premarital education programs based on psychological skills has been widely demonstrated, it is important to recognize that most existing models are still predominantly grounded in Western conceptual frameworks that emphasize individualism and personal autonomy. Halford et al. (2003) critically highlight that approaches such as PREP tend to insufficiently address the religious dimensions and local cultural contexts, which are crucial determinants in non-Western societies. (Halford et al., 2003)

This underscores the urgency of integrating psychological dimensions with Islamic values and the customary wisdom of the Minangkabau community, so that communication and conflict

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resolution skills are not only understood technically but are also framed within an Islamic ethical framework, including concepts such as ḥusn al-ẓann (positive assumptions), ta'āruf (mutual acquaintance), tasyāwur (consultation), and iṣlāḥ (reconciliation). Such integration would produce a model of psychological preparation that is not only relationally adaptive but also spiritually meaningful and culturally relevant.Psychological factors play a crucial role in the development of emotional readiness, which constitutes the internal framework through which individuals manage the dynamics of interpersonal relationships with their partners. This dimension encompasses a set of interrelated competencies, including effective and empathetic interpersonal communication skills, emotional regulation capacity to healthily manage negative emotions, and mastery of constructive conflict resolution skills oriented toward win-win solutions. This dimension aligns with and is theoretically grounded in the relationship competence theory, which emphasizes that the quality and stability of romantic relationships are significantly determined by partners' proficiency in these essential interpersonal skills (Markman & Rhoades, 2010).

Individuals possessing mature emotional readiness tend to adaptively manage the inevitable conflicts within marriage, foster and maintain open, assertive, and empathetic communication patterns, and sustain relationship stability over the long term despite facing various internal and external pressures (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Therefore, psychological readiness functions as a vital operational component, serving as a bridge that transforms normative values and religious teachings into tangible, measurable, and experiential relational practices in everyday marital life.

Cultural Readiness

The dimension of cultural readiness represents a distinctive finding that significantly differentiates this study from previous research, which tends to overlook cultural variables in the analysis of marital readiness. Within the unique and complex context of Minangkabau society, cultural readiness encompasses three closely interrelated aspects. First, a profound understanding of customs and social norms governing marriage practices, including knowledge of the stages of traditional ceremonies such as maresek (initial courtship), maminang (formal engagement), batimbang tando (exchange of binding tokens), and baralek (traditional wedding celebration). Each stage embodies philosophical values that emphasize patience, respect, and social responsibility. Second, the ability to adapt within the matrilineal kinship system, where women occupy the central position in lineage and inheritance, while men perform dual roles as husbands within the nuclear family and as mamak (maternal uncles) responsible for their sister's

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children. This duality demands a high capacity for adaptation and clear understanding to prevent conflicts of loyalty and role tensions. Third, an awareness of the role and involvement of the extended family in marital life, which includes recognition of collective authority in important decision-making, acceptance of family deliberation mechanisms as forums for conflict resolution, and respect for social hierarchy within the extended family structure.

Anthropological literature richly illustrates that, within Minangkabau society, marriage is never perceived merely as a private matter between two individuals. Instead, it is understood as a social institution involving two clans or extended families, each holding collective interests, dignity, and responsibilities. Navis (1984), in his seminal work on Alam Takambang Jadi Guru, explains that the Minangkabau matrilineal system creates a complex network of kinship, whereby every individual is bound by rights and obligations prescribed by customary law. (Navis, 1984)

Blackwood (2000), through her ethnographic research, corroborates these findings by demonstrating that decision-making in Minangkabau marriages cannot be separated from the authority of the mamak, bundo kanduang, and adat elders, who possess cultural legitimacy. Consequently, the unpreparedness of prospective partners particularly migrants or urbanized younger generations in understanding and navigating these intricate social dynamics often leads to tensions, misunderstandings, and prolonged conflicts within the household. Such conflicts extend beyond the marital couple to involve wider familial networks, resulting in systemic repercussions.Furthermore, the synthesis of the literature reveals that Minangkabau customary values such as deliberation (musyawarah mufakat), collectivity (raso jo pareso), and social responsibility (tanggung jawab basamo) function as effective social control mechanisms in strengthening family resilience. These values provide a normative and procedural framework for couples to resolve disputes peacefully within family forums, thereby preventing conflict escalation that may lead to divorce, and ensuring that all decisions consider the collective interest rather than individual egos. (Blackwood, 2000)

The integration of these values with Islamic principles, which also strongly emphasize deliberation (QS. Asy-Syura: 38), brotherhood (ukhuwwah), and reconciliation (ṣulḥ), reflects a contextual, adaptive, and organic practice of living Islam. Bowen (2003), in his study on Islam and culture in Indonesia, asserts that such indigenization processes do not represent syncretism that dilutes religious teachings but rather a local articulation of universal Islamic values that enriches and strengthens religious practice. Thus, socio-cultural readiness should not be regarded as a peripheral dimension but as an integral and inseparable component in shaping the ideal partnership within the Minangkabau society, which is rich in tradition.The Minangkabau

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customary system plays a significant role in shaping what is conceptualized as socio-cultural readiness. This dimension encompasses a set of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that enable individuals and couples to function effectively and harmoniously within a specific sociocultural environment. Such readiness involves a comprehensive understanding of both the written and unwritten customary norms, the unique matrilineal kinship structure along with its associated rights and obligations, as well as the recognition and respect for the central role and active involvement of the extended family throughout every stage of the marital life cycle. Within the Minangkabau customary system, marriage is fundamentally positioned as a communal social institution that engages and unites two clans, rather than merely a private and personal relationship between two individuals in love (Blackwood, 2000).

The guiding life philosophy, “adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah,” represents a comprehensive manifestation of the organic integration between religious and cultural values, serving as the ideological and operational foundation for the entire social order. From this analytical perspective, socio-cultural readiness is not only concerned with the cognitive ability to know and memorize customary rules but extends further to encompass individuals' capacity to adapt, negotiate, and function harmoniously within a collective social system characterized by its own expectations, mechanisms of control, and social sanctions (Bowen, 2003).

Integrative Model of Premarital Preparation: Towards the Construction of the Ideal Couple

Based on an in-depth and comprehensive thematic synthesis, this study proposes an integrative model of premarital preparation that systematically combines three primary dimensions previously outlined: spiritual readiness, psychological readiness, and socio-cultural readiness. This model does not regard these three dimensions as separate or linear entities, where one must be fulfilled before the others. Instead, they are understood as dynamically interacting subsystems that influence one another and collectively form a holistic, integrated, and mutually reinforcing system of readiness. Weaknesses or imbalances in any one dimension create systemic vulnerabilities that may affect the overall quality and stability of the relationship, even when the other dimensions are well developed. (Bowen, 2003)

In this model, spiritual readiness is positioned as the normative foundation that provides values, meaning, and existential purpose to marriage. This dimension addresses the fundamental questions of "why marry" and "what is the purpose of marriage," orienting the entire household dynamic toward achieving divine approval and the realization of a sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah family as mandated in the Qur’an. Without a solid spiritual foundation, marriage risks losing its

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sacred orientation and is reduced to a fragile worldly contract. Meanwhile, psychological readiness functions as the operational mechanism, providing a set of relational competencies to manage couple interactions effectively, adaptively, and constructively. If spiritual readiness offers the "value compass," psychological readiness supplies the "navigation skills" that enable couples to communicate, negotiate, and resolve conflicts without damaging emotional bonds. Lastly, socio-cultural readiness provides the structural context that governs the couple's relationship within the broader social system. This dimension ensures that couples do not exist in social vacuum but are capable of understanding, respecting, and harmoniously functioning within kinship networks, customary norms, and communal expectations characteristic of collectivist societies such as the Minangkabau. (Fincham & Beach, 2011)

The synergistic interaction of these three dimensions produces a construct referred to as the "ideal couple," characterized not only by a profound and steadfast religious commitment but also by mature psychological competence and heightened cultural sensitivity and intelligence. Within this model, the ideal couple is one that successfully harmonizes vertical obedience to God with horizontal, harmonious relationships involving the spouse, extended family, and society. The model further demonstrates that weaknesses in any one dimension can trigger a domino effect, disrupting systemic equilibrium. For instance, couples with strong spiritual and psychological readiness but limited understanding of customary traditions may repeatedly encounter social friction and collective pressures. Conversely, couples well-versed in customs but lacking spiritual depth and communication skills may struggle to establish intimacy and internal resilience. These findings significantly extend the existing literature by offering a more contextualized, multidimensional framework that is highly relevant to the sociocultural realities of the Muslim Nusantara community, particularly in accommodating the harmonious integration of Islamic values and Minangkabau local wisdom. Given its comprehensive characteristics, the proposed model holds considerable potential for adaptation in public policy development, marriage guidance curricula, and community-based premarital educational programs with greater practical applicability. (Tranfield et al., 2003)

The pinnacle of this research conceptual framework lies in the integration of the three readiness dimensions previously described: spiritual readiness, emotional (psychological) readiness, and socio-cultural readiness. These dimensions serve as the principal determinants shaping and defining the ideal partner model. Rather than existing independently, these three dimensions complement, reinforce, and dynamically interact within a cohesive system. This interaction can be illustrated as follows: spiritual readiness provides normative direction,

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meaning, and a foundation of values that act as the moral compass for marriage; psychological readiness offers a set of adaptive capacities and operational skills necessary for managing daily relational functions; meanwhile, socio-cultural readiness ensures that the entire relational dynamic aligns with and is appropriate to the social and cultural context in which the family grows and develops. (Geertz, 1960)

The harmonious integration of these three dimensions produces the construction of the ideal partner one who not only possesses a strong religious commitment and stable emotional maturity but also exhibits high cultural sensitivity and flexible adaptability within complex social systems. This model explicitly assumes that imbalance or deficiency in any one dimension generates vulnerabilities that can directly affect the overall quality and stability of the relationship. Theoretically, this framework significantly expands the scope and depth of family systems theory by consciously incorporating religious and cultural variables not as static external contexts but as integral and dynamic components in the analysis of marital readiness (Kagitcibasi, 2007). Moreover, this framework directly addresses and offers solutions to the limitations of Western models characterized by individualism, providing an alternative approach that is more contextual, inclusive, and genuinely grounded in local value systems.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the formation of an ideal couple within the context of Minangkabau society cannot rely on a single dimension alone; rather, it necessitates a synergistic integration of spiritual, psychological, and socio-cultural readiness. Spiritual readiness serves as a fundamental foundation, providing value orientation, sacred meaning, and long-term commitment in marriage through the understanding of family fiqh, consistent religious practice, and the internalization of Islamic ethics. Psychological readiness functions as an operational mechanism, equipping couples with communication skills, emotional regulation, and constructive conflict resolution essential for daily relational dynamics. Meanwhile, socio-cultural readiness constitutes a distinctive dimension that ensures couples can adapt and function harmoniously within the matrilineal kinship system, customary norms, and extended family involvement characteristic of this collective society. The interaction among these three dimensions forms a holistic integrative premarital preparation model, whereby deficiencies in any single dimension create systemic vulnerabilities that impact the overall stability of the relationship. This model offers a more contextual and multidimensional conceptual framework compared to the individualistic Western models, while also expanding family systems theory by incorporating

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religious and cultural variables as integral components in the analysis of marital readiness.

The implementation of these research findings is realized through the development of a premarital guidance program based on the integrative model encompassing three main modules. The first module focuses on strengthening spiritual readiness through in-depth study of family fiqh, habituation of joint worship, and internalization of Islamic ethical values as the moral compass of marriage. The second module enhances psychological readiness by training assertive communication skills, emotional regulation strategies, and constructive conflict resolution techniques framed within Islamic ethics. The third module builds socio-cultural readiness by fostering understanding of customary marriage stages, the dynamics of the matrilineal system, the roles of mamak and bundo kanduang, as well as family deliberation mechanisms. This program is collaboratively implemented by the Office of Religious Affairs in partnership with customary institutions and community leaders, involving extended family members in participatory sessions. Additionally, an assessment instrument based on the three dimensions has been developed to identify strengths and areas for development for each couple. This approach enables premarital education programs to be more contextual, practical, and relevant to the sociocultural realities of Minangkabau society.

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