

Understanding Community Perceptions of *Mawaddah Warahmah* in the Formation of Sakinah Families in West Kotamobagu, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the understanding of the West Kotamobagu community regarding the concept of mawaddah warahmah and to analyze its implementation in the formation of sakinah families. The research employed a qualitative field approach through direct interviews with community members. The findings reveal that the community interprets mawaddah as enduring love and affection maintained to preserve family harmony, while rahmah is understood as divine mercy reflected in mutual compassion, forgiveness, and care among family members. The implementation of these values is manifested through open communication, daily attention to one another, and patience in dealing with household challenges. Supporting factors identified include strong faith, religious observance, adequate economic conditions, and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife. Conversely, several obstacles are encountered, such as ineffective communication, economic difficulties, limited religious understanding, and the influence of social media that reduces direct interaction between spouses. Based on these findings, this study suggests strengthening the learning of mawaddah warahmah values, family communication training, economic empowerment, social media literacy, and the enhancement of religious knowledge as key efforts to realize a harmonious and happy sakinah family grounded in the principles of mawaddah warahmah.

Keywords: *Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah, Family Resilience, Community Perception*

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Introduction

The family is universally recognized as the smallest yet most vital social institution, composed of individuals bound by rights, responsibilities, and interdependent roles. In Islam, the family is not merely a social or biological unit but a sacred covenant established through marriage. This covenant is founded on sincerity, loyalty, and faith, aiming ultimately to seek the pleasure of Allah (Soelaeman, 1994). Within this framework, marriage functions as the foundation for spiritual growth, emotional security, and social stability, creating a household where moral values, strong character, and social responsibility are nurtured. Central to Islamic teachings on family life are the concepts of sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah. Sakinah refers to tranquility and peace within the household, enabling couples to face life's challenges with mutual support. Mawaddah denotes deep love and respect that strengthens intimacy between spouses, while rahmah emphasizes compassion, empathy,

and care (As-Subki, 2010; Ghozali, 2003). Together, these principles create a family environment conducive to resilience, happiness, and the moral and spiritual development of all members, ultimately contributing to the broader welfare of society.

The Qur'an explicitly underlines the importance of these principles in Surah Ar-Rum verse 21: "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you love and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reflect" (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019, p. 585). This verse not only establishes the divine basis for marriage but also highlights that *mawaddah* and *rahmah* are essential for achieving the tranquility and harmony of a *sakinah* family. Similarly, Ash-Shiddieqy (2000) and Yudisia (2014) stress that marriage in Islamic law encompasses emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions, which are essential for both individual fulfillment and communal well-being.

Previous research has discussed these concepts extensively from theoretical, jurisprudential, and psychological perspectives. Mufidah (2008) emphasizes the role of emotional health and gender-sensitive approaches in sustaining marital harmony, while Riyadi (2013) highlights the importance of marriage counseling and Islamic *da'wah* in guiding couples to build *sakinah* families. Fathurrahman (2023) demonstrates the continued relevance of Al-Ghazali's classical insights when aligned with contemporary positive psychology. These studies reinforce the notion that Islamic family principles are dynamic and applicable in addressing modern challenges.

However, while the theoretical foundations are strong, empirical investigations focusing on local communities, particularly in Sulawesi, remain limited. In West Kotamobagu District, families experience diverse interpretations of *mawaddah* and *rahmah*, influenced by cultural norms, socio-economic factors, education, and individual experiences. Many households may appear harmonious externally, but internal challenges such as poor communication, unmet expectations, and financial pressures often undermine the ideals of *sakinah* families.

The practical application of these principles within West Kotamobagu presents a unique context for study. Local families face challenges including economic constraints, balancing modern lifestyles, and responding to societal expectations, which may conflict with traditional values of love, compassion, and mutual respect. Furthermore, cultural variations in understanding these principles generate differences in household practices, raising questions about the extent to which these values effectively contribute to the formation of harmonious, resilient families.

The scientific novelty of this research lies in its focus on the lived experiences of Muslim families in West Kotamobagu, exploring how they understand and implement *mawaddah wa rahmah*. Unlike prior studies that focus on theory or broader populations, this study investigates the local context of Sulawesi, where no similar research has been conducted. By examining the perspectives and practices of actual households, the study provides new insights into how Islamic values are negotiated and manifested in daily life.

Accordingly, this study addresses several research questions: To what extent do families in West Kotamobagu embody the principles of *mawaddah* and *rahmah*? How do they manage conflicts and external pressures while maintaining marital harmony? How do variations in understanding and applying these values influence the formation of *sakinah* families? These questions aim to uncover the dynamic interplay between religious principles, local culture, and socio-economic realities in shaping family life.

In response to these challenges, the purpose of this article is to analyze the community's understanding and practical application of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in West Kotamobagu households. The study seeks to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the discourse on Islamic family development, demonstrating how Qur'anic principles can strengthen marital resilience, promote emotional well-being, and foster social harmony within contemporary Muslim communities.

Ultimately, this research emphasizes the urgent need to understand local interpretations of Islamic family values. By focusing on West Kotamobagu District, the study highlights the

significance of contextualized research, which not only addresses gaps in existing literature but also offers guidance for policy, counseling, and community programs aimed at

fostering stronger, more harmonious families rooted in *sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah* (Soelaeman, 1994; As-Subki, 2010; Mufidah, 2008; Yudisia, 2014; Riyadi, 2013; Fathurrahman, 2023).

Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the understanding and implementation of *mawaddah warahmah* in forming *sakinah* families in Kotamobagu Barat District, Kotamobagu City. Qualitative research was chosen to understand social phenomena in their natural context, producing a comprehensive and detailed depiction of participants' experiences without researcher intervention (Creswell, 1998). The case study design enabled an in-depth examination of family dynamics, meanings, and social processes that are not immediately observable.

The research focused on community members as the primary unit of analysis, aiming to understand how *mawaddah warahmah* is perceived and applied in daily family life. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through unstructured interviews and observations to capture participants' experiences directly, while secondary data came from books, journals, theses, and other relevant documents to support and triangulate findings (Murdiyantono, 2020; Assyakurrohim et al., 2023). The researcher served as the main instrument, supported by audio recorders, notebooks, cameras, writing tools, computers, and transportation to facilitate systematic fieldwork.

Data collection techniques included observation to document everyday behaviors and family interactions, interviews to explore personal insights, and document analysis to complement field data (Cahaya, 2007). Data analysis followed an inductive process, starting with data reduction to summarize and focus on essential information, data presentation in descriptive narrative supported by categories and patterns, and conclusion drawing by synthesizing findings to answer the research questions (Sugiyono, n.d.; Arikanto, 2006). This approach ensured reliability and validity while providing a rich, contextualized understanding of how Islamic family values are interpreted and practiced in Kotamobagu Barat (Fadli, 2021).

In addition, this methodological framework allowed the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the participants' lived realities. The qualitative case study design was particularly effective for exploring values and meanings embedded in family relationships, as it provided the flexibility to adapt to emerging themes during fieldwork. Through the use of multiple data sources and triangulation, the study enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Moreover, by emphasizing participants' perspectives, emotions, and cultural contexts, the research highlighted the complex interplay between religious teachings and daily practices. This comprehensive approach not only deepened the understanding of *mawaddah warahmah* as a guiding principle in family life but also offered insights into how Islamic values shape social harmony and resilience within the community.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the residents of Kotamobagu Barat possess a nuanced understanding of the concept of *mawaddah wa rahmah*, recognizing it as a central pillar in building a harmonious and sustainable household, or *keluarga sakinah*. Interviews with seven respondents from different villages within Kotamobagu Barat provided rich qualitative data, reflecting both individual interpretations and shared communal norms regarding love and compassion in marital life. The respondents consistently emphasized that marriage is intended not only to fulfill personal companionship but also to establish tranquility, mutual care, and family well-being, as guided by Islamic values. These findings

are significant because they demonstrate that the understanding of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in this community extends beyond abstract definitions, becoming a lived practice that shapes the dynamics of marital and familial relationships.

The interview with Anita Hubura indicated that her understanding of *mawaddah wa rahmah* was primarily shaped through participation in *Majelis Ta'lim*, a traditional Islamic study group led by a female religious teacher (*ustadzah*). She articulated that *mawaddah* embodies sincere love among spouses and family members, which must be consistently nurtured to ensure a harmonious household. *Rahmah*, according to her, represents compassion, forming the emotional bedrock of familial life. She emphasized that love and compassion are not static ideals but require continual effort, patience, and mutual reinforcement to maintain marital stability (Anita Hubura, 2025). Her testimony highlights the pivotal role of traditional religious education in transmitting ethical and spiritual values, reinforcing the importance of communal learning as a medium for cultivating marital virtues.

Similarly, Nur Rahma elaborated that her conception of *mawaddah wa rahmah* derives from a combination of religious study, including reading Islamic literature, attending study sessions, and watching online religious lectures. She defined *mawaddah* as a form of love that emerges naturally from tranquility in the household, whereas *rahmah* represents divine mercy that facilitates forgiveness, patience, and emotional balance. She emphasized that such understanding is actively applied in her daily interactions with her spouse, fostering harmony through continuous care, empathy, and avoidance of anger (Nur Rahma, 2025). Her reflections underscore the interplay between modern and traditional modes of religious learning, indicating that access to multiple sources—books, videos, and in-person study—enhances understanding and internalization of marital ethics.

Nursintia, another female respondent, provided an interpretation of *mawaddah wa rahmah* that highlighted responsibility alongside affection. She explained that *mawaddah* is not only love but also encompasses the ethical obligations of both husband and wife, requiring commitment to household duties and mutual accountability. *Rahmah*, in her understanding, is the compassionate dimension that complements love, ensuring that emotional bonds are expressed through caring actions and forgiveness (Nursintia, 2025). This view reflects an integrated approach in which ethical responsibility and affective care are inseparable, reinforcing the notion that a *keluarga sakinah* is built upon both spiritual and practical foundations.

Male respondents provided complementary perspectives that reinforced and nuanced the understanding of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in Kotamobagu Barat. Arjuna Datau explained that *mawaddah* represents love accompanied by responsibility, where a husband's sincere affection is reciprocated by the wife's respect and care. *Rahmah* is perceived as the manifestation of God's mercy, expressed in acts of selfless love and empathy between spouses (Arjuna, 2025). Similarly, Faisal Pakaya emphasized that *mawaddah* is love rooted in devotion to Allah, which remains steadfast even during conflicts or trials, while *rahmah* functions as an emotional buffer, enabling patience and forgiveness. He highlighted that these values are learned from mosque sermons and online religious lectures, indicating the role of both institutionalized and digital religious education in shaping marital norms (Faisal Pakaya, 2025).

Yulianti, another female participant, underscored the practical dimension of *mawaddah wa rahmah*, emphasizing that love and compassion are realized through everyday actions, such as mutual support, appreciation, and sacrifice. According to her, *mawaddah* manifests in tangible care and commitment, while *rahmah* ensures the endurance of harmony and understanding within the household. Her reflections illustrate how abstract religious concepts are localized into actionable behaviors, reinforcing household stability and emotional well-being (Yulianti, 2025). Rijal, meanwhile, provided a more straightforward, grassroots perspective, viewing *mawaddah* as love and loyalty and *rahmah* as empathy demonstrated in daily caregiving, such as attending to a sick spouse.

Although less theoretical, his practical understanding demonstrates the pervasive influence of communal religious teachings on ordinary household practices (Rijal, 2025).

Collectively, the respondents' insights converge on the view that *mawaddah wa rahmah* is the ethical and emotional foundation of a harmonious family. The study indicates that while respondents' definitions vary in nuance, they consistently recognize the interdependence of love and compassion, linking them to tangible responsibilities, ethical conduct, and spiritual awareness. The concept of *mawaddah* is not limited to romantic affection but includes loyalty, care, and ethical commitment, whereas *rahmah* embodies mercy, empathy, and the capacity to forgive, reflecting both divine guidance and practical moral behavior. Gender roles are embedded in these interpretations, with husbands typically associated with demonstrating love and responsibility, and wives expected to embody respect and nurturing. Yet, the findings also reveal an emerging awareness of reciprocity, indicating that women's contributions and sacrifices are integral to sustaining household harmony.

Moreover, the study highlights the interplay between religious learning and daily practice. Traditional institutions, such as *Majelis Ta'lim* and mosque sermons, function as primary sites for transmitting knowledge, whereas digital media, including online lectures and religious videos, expand access to ethical guidance. Respondents consistently stressed that love and compassion require intentional and repeated practice in daily life, patience, and the ability to maintain harmony despite conflict. This aligns with broader Islamic teachings that conceptualize marriage as a sacred covenant in which God places love and mercy between spouses to sustain companionship, tranquility, and stability (Qur'an, Ar-Rum 30:21; As-Subki, 2010).

The implementation of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in households across Kotamobagu Barat reveals that the values of love and compassion are not merely theoretical concepts but are actively translated into daily behaviors, communication practices, and family routines. Respondents highlighted that the expression of *mawaddah*, understood as sincere love and care, and *rahmah*, defined as compassion and empathy, is crucial for sustaining a harmonious family environment. The study demonstrates that these values manifest through everyday interactions, decision-making, conflict resolution, and emotional support, illustrating how Islamic ethical principles are internalized and adapted within local cultural contexts.

Anita Hubura described her household practices, noting that *mawaddah* is expressed by safeguarding each other's feelings and avoiding hurtful language, while *rahmah* is implemented through caring actions, especially during illness or times of need. She emphasized that communication is central to maintaining a *keluarga sakinah*, explaining that conflicts are resolved calmly, with mutual understanding, rather than left to fester. Her approach reflects an awareness that emotional intelligence and interpersonal sensitivity are essential components of love and compassion within marriage (Anita Hubura, 2025). She further stated that husbands often take the initiative to de-escalate disputes, highlighting gendered patterns in conflict management that support household harmony.

Similarly, Nur Rahma emphasized the importance of daily acts of love and attentiveness. She explained that *mawaddah* is cultivated through small gestures, such as preparing meals, greeting each other warmly, or providing emotional support. *Rahmah*, she continued, encourages spouses to forgive mistakes, avoid anger, and maintain a peaceful environment, even during disagreements. She also highlighted that faith and devotion to Allah serve as the foundational framework for these behaviors, suggesting that spiritual awareness strengthens ethical and emotional commitments in marital life (Nur Rahma, 2025). In addition, she identified communication as a pivotal factor, warning that neglecting dialogue can lead to misunderstandings that disrupt familial harmony.

Nursintia Mahmud echoed these observations, emphasizing that *mawaddah wa rahmah* is realized through attention to daily interactions, mutual understanding, and forgiveness. She noted that even with a busy work schedule, she ensures she maintains contact with her spouse, asks about his well-being, and provides emotional support. *Rahmah* is demonstrated by forgiving errors and showing compassion, which prevents

conflicts from escalating. She also pointed out economic challenges as potential obstacles to harmony, indicating that financial stability is intertwined with the practical application of love and compassion. Her reflections underscore the multifaceted nature of *mawaddah wa rahmah*, integrating emotional, ethical, and practical considerations (Nursintia, 2025).

Male respondents similarly articulated how *mawaddah wa rahmah* guides their daily conduct. Arjuna Datau emphasized that love and compassion are practiced through patience, understanding, and structured problem-solving. He identified three critical factors supporting the development of a harmonious family: religious adherence, effective communication, and economic sufficiency. Conversely, he recognized that limited religious knowledge could lead to self-centered behaviors, thereby disrupting household harmony. In addressing conflicts, he and his spouse deliberately choose appropriate times to discuss issues calmly, often after prayers or meals, to prevent emotional escalation (Arjuna, 2025). Faisal Pakaya reinforced the significance of patience, humility, and direct communication in implementing *mawaddah wa rahmah*. Having been married for 20 years, he observed that marital trials, particularly financial difficulties, require cooperative problem-solving and mutual understanding. He highlighted the adverse influence of social media as a contemporary challenge, as excessive phone usage can impede meaningful interaction and diminish familial cohesion. Faisal's approach demonstrates a pragmatic understanding of *mawaddah wa rahmah*, emphasizing that ethical and emotional values must adapt to contemporary societal pressures while maintaining their spiritual foundation (Faisal Pakaya, 2025).

Yulianti illustrated the translation of these principles into tangible actions. For her, *mawaddah* involves cultivating love and attentiveness toward family members, whereas *rahmah* is reflected in patience, understanding, and gentleness during interpersonal interactions. She identified supporting factors for harmonious family life, including mutual trust, respect, effective communication, and alignment with religious values. Obstacles she highlighted included poor communication and individual ego, which can exacerbate conflicts. When disagreements arise, Yulianti and her spouse prioritize calming down before engaging in dialogue, illustrating a deliberate approach to conflict management that aligns with Islamic teachings on patience and reconciliation (Yulianti, 2025).

Rijal described his understanding of practical *mawaddah wa rahmah* as attention, support, and empathy. He stressed that effective communication and mutual understanding are central to maintaining a *keluarga sakinah*, while acknowledging potential obstacles, including financial constraints and lack of communication. When conflicts occur, Rijal emphasized resolving issues through calm and respectful discussion, coupled with the deliberate lowering of ego on both sides. His approach underscores the centrality of dialogue and emotional regulation in actualizing the principles of love and compassion within daily life (Rijal, 2025).

The cumulative findings indicate that *mawaddah wa rahmah* in Kotamobagu Barat is implemented through a combination of emotional attentiveness, ethical responsibility, practical support, and spiritual awareness. While theoretical knowledge of these values is important, respondents emphasized the necessity of translating understanding into concrete actions, highlighting that love and compassion are most effectively internalized through lived experience. Practical behaviors include attentive listening, patient problem-solving, mutual respect, care during illness, small acts of kindness, and consistent forgiveness. Furthermore, respondents identified factors such as religious education, communication quality, economic stability, and the ability to manage contemporary social pressures as critical in sustaining harmonious marital relations.

Building upon the findings regarding understanding and implementation of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in Kotamobagu Barat, a critical analysis reveals both strengths and limitations in the study, as well as important theoretical connections to prior research. The results demonstrate that respondents not only understand the concept intellectually but also actively apply it in daily life. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing that the practical manifestation of Islamic marital ethics requires both knowledge and intentional action. According to As-Subki (2010), *mawaddah wa rahmah* encompasses love, compassion, and responsibility, forming the ethical foundation for marital harmony and

spiritual well-being. The current study confirms these theoretical assertions, illustrating that residents of Kotamobagu Barat translate these values into actionable behaviors, including patient communication, mutual support, and ethical conflict resolution.

Despite the insightful findings, a critical reflection reveals several limitations. Firstly, the sample size is relatively small, consisting of only seven respondents from various villages. While their perspectives provide depth, they may not fully represent the diversity of experiences and understandings across the entire Kotamobagu Barat community. Secondly, potential gender bias may have influenced responses, as male and female respondents may emphasize different aspects of *mawaddah wa rahmah* due to culturally defined marital roles. For instance, women frequently described caregiving and emotional attentiveness, whereas men emphasized responsibility, problem-solving, and leadership within the household. Thirdly, time constraints limited the duration and frequency of interviews, potentially restricting the depth of exploration into more complex family dynamics or the nuanced application of *mawaddah wa rahmah* over time.

The discussion of these findings in relation to prior research highlights both consistencies and novel insights. Previous studies indicate that a successful *keluarga sakinah* is underpinned by mutual love and divine compassion, which are operationalized through ethical behavior, communication, and empathy (Soelaeman, 1994). The current study reinforces this by showing that respondents consistently translate theoretical knowledge into daily practices, emphasizing concrete behaviors such as caring during illness, attentiveness to the spouse's emotional needs, small acts of kindness, and patience in conflict resolution. Importantly, these findings expand prior research by illustrating how contemporary influences, such as social media, intersect with traditional religious teachings, creating both opportunities and challenges for sustaining household harmony. Respondents like Faisal Pakaya highlighted that excessive engagement with digital devices could reduce direct communication, revealing an emergent factor not deeply explored in earlier studies.

Moreover, the study illuminates the critical role of religious education and digital media in shaping marital values. *Majelis Ta'lim*, mosque sermons, and online religious videos collectively function as a hybrid educational environment that fosters understanding and internalization of *mawaddah wa rahmah*. This supports Mufidah's (2025) assertion that ethical knowledge must be actively transmitted through both formal and informal channels to be effectively integrated into daily life. Respondents consistently emphasized that knowledge alone is insufficient; intentional application is required to cultivate harmony, patience, and resilience in marriage.

The analysis also highlights the interplay between structural and personal factors in family life. Respondents identified economic stability, effective communication, and religious adherence as crucial determinants for the successful implementation of *mawaddah wa rahmah*. Economic challenges were consistently cited as a source of tension, demonstrating that material conditions intersect with emotional and ethical dimensions to shape marital outcomes. Communication, in particular, emerged as a central mediating factor: households with consistent, open, and empathetic dialogue were more likely to realize a *keluarga sakinah*, whereas poor communication exacerbated misunderstandings and conflicts. These observations align with broader sociological research, which posits that both affective bonds and structural conditions interact to sustain family cohesion.

Furthermore, the study contributes to a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics within the practice of *mawaddah wa rahmah*. While both men and women recognize love and compassion as central, the study reveals that men often assume roles associated with responsibility, problem-solving, and financial provision, whereas women frequently focus on caregiving, emotional attentiveness, and conflict mediation. This division of labor, while culturally situated, does not diminish the significance of either partner's contributions; rather, it underscores the importance of mutual recognition and collaboration in sustaining harmonious marital relationships. This finding echoes As-Subki (2010) who emphasized the complementary nature of spousal roles in achieving *keluarga sakinah*.

In addressing the limitations, future research could expand the sample size to include more diverse participants across Kotamobagu Barat, incorporate longitudinal methods to track changes over time, and employ mixed-method approaches to integrate quantitative measures of household satisfaction, conflict resolution, and emotional well-being. Such approaches would enhance the generalizability and robustness of findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how *mawaddah wa rahmah* operates in diverse contexts. Additionally, exploring the influence of emerging technologies, cultural shifts, and economic pressures could deepen insights into contemporary challenges and adaptations in sustaining marital harmony.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the understanding and application of *mawaddah wa rahmah* among Kotamobagu Barat residents is deeply intertwined with daily life, ethical responsibility, and spiritual awareness. Respondents consistently described concrete behaviors that operationalize love and compassion, highlighting communication, patience, mutual support, and ethical conflict resolution as central to family harmony. While limitations exist in terms of sample size, gender representation, and temporal constraints, the findings provide meaningful insights into the lived experience of Islamic marital values, reinforcing theoretical assertions from prior research and highlighting contextual factors that support or impede the formation of a *keluarga sakinah*. By integrating traditional religious teachings with practical daily actions, residents exemplify a holistic approach to marriage that sustains both emotional and spiritual well-being within the household.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore how the community of Kotamobagu Barat interprets the concepts of *mawaddah wa rahmah* and how these interpretations contribute to the formation of a *keluarga sakinah*. The research demonstrates that members of the community understand *mawaddah* not merely as emotional love, but as an enduring sense of responsibility and care within marriage, while *rahmah* is perceived as compassion manifested through patience, forgiveness, and mutual support. Together, these values function as the essential foundation for maintaining marital harmony and resilience, thereby fulfilling the aspiration of a *keluarga sakinah*. The findings also indicate that local interpretations are shaped by multiple sources, including *majelis ta'lim*, mosque sermons, and digital religious media, which collectively integrate Islamic principles into everyday family life. This highlights the adaptability of Islamic values within contemporary contexts, where traditional and modern sources of knowledge intersect to sustain family well-being. In conclusion, the study affirms that the people of Kotamobagu Barat internalize *mawaddah wa rahmah* as both theological ideals and practical guides to family life. Future research may further investigate how these values are negotiated in different social contexts, or how generational differences influence the application of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in shaping a harmonious family.

Furthermore, the results underscore that the integration of *mawaddah wa rahmah* in family life is not limited to religious rituals but extends to the ethical and emotional dimensions of daily interaction between spouses. The participants' understanding reflects a contextual interpretation of Islamic teachings that balances spiritual devotion with social responsibility. This demonstrates that *mawaddah wa rahmah* serves as a dynamic moral framework guiding decision-making, conflict resolution, and the cultivation of emotional stability within marriage. The study also suggests that communal institutions such as local religious gatherings and educational initiatives play a crucial role in reinforcing these values, ensuring their transmission across generations. By connecting religious concepts with real-life experiences, the community of Kotamobagu Barat exemplifies how Islamic ethics can remain relevant and transformative amidst changing cultural and technological environments.

In addition, the findings reveal that the embodiment of *mawaddah wa rahmah* within families is influenced by several contextual factors such as education, socio-economic conditions, and gender roles. For instance, educated couples tend to interpret

mawaddah as mutual partnership and shared responsibility, while others view it primarily in terms of affection and loyalty. This variation shows that Islamic values are internalized differently according to life experiences and exposure to religious education. The influence of digital media also plays an emerging role, providing new platforms for learning about marriage ethics and fostering discussions on family resilience grounded in Islamic teachings. Moreover, religious leaders and community figures serve as key mediators who contextualize *mawaddah wa rahmah* through relatable examples and local wisdom, ensuring that the values remain both authentic and applicable to modern family challenges.

Overall, the research contributes to a broader understanding of how religious concepts evolve in practice and how communities interpret divine guidance within their cultural framework. The case of Kotamobagu Barat illustrates that *mawaddah wa rahmah* are not static theological terms but living values that shape attitudes, behaviors, and emotional bonds in family life. This perspective enriches contemporary discourse on Islamic family studies, highlighting that the strength of a *keluarga sakinah* lies not only in doctrinal conformity but also in the continuous negotiation of love, mercy, and mutual respect within everyday realities.

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