

MEDIATION AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR PREVENTING DIVORCE: A HADITH-BASED STUDY ON MARITAL RECONCILIATION AND FAMILY HARMONY

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ABSTRACT The steady increase in divorce rates in Indonesia (reflected in 1,830 *cerai gugat* and 607 *cerai talak* cases recorded between 2019 and 2023) indicates the need for a more effective and contextually grounded family mediation model. Formal mediation in the Religious Courts often remains a procedural requirement rather than a substantive process that addresses the emotional and spiritual dimensions of marital conflict. This study analyzes hadiths on marital reconciliation and formulates four prophetic mediation principles (justice and objectivity, conflict prevention, *maṣlaḥah*-oriented decision-making, and moderation that avoids harm) as a foundation for strengthening contemporary mediation practices. Employing a qualitative descriptive method with a thematic *maʿānī al-ḥadīth* approach, the study collects reconciliation-related hadiths, interprets them through classical commentaries, and integrates them with family psychology literature and modern mediation theories. The findings demonstrate that prophetic values can be synthesized into an “ethically grounded procedural mediation” model that combines procedural accuracy with ethical and psychological depth. Practically, this framework offers guidance for enhancing the implementation of PERMA No. 1/2016, KMA 498/2020, and PMA 20/2019 by integrating prophetic principles into mediator training, premarital programs, and non-litigation counseling services in the Religious Courts and KUA. Future research is encouraged to assess the effectiveness of this model through field observations, case-based applications, and the development of Sunnah-based mediation modules. This study contributes to Islamic family law scholarship by proposing a humanistic, preventive, and culturally relevant Islamic family mediation model.

KEYWORDS *Family mediation, reconciliation hadith, islāḥ values, Prophetic Sunnah, religious court mediation*

INTRODUCTION

The rising divorce rate in Indonesia over recent years indicates that family stability is facing serious challenges from economic, social, and psychological dimensions, as reflected in the 1,830 *cerai gugat* and 607 *cerai talak* cases recorded between 2019 and 2023 (Tsaqife et al., 2025). This situation becomes even more complex when formal mediation in the Religious Courts has not yet functioned optimally as a conflict-resolution instrument. Many couples undergo mediation merely as an administrative formality rather than a substantive space for reconciliation. Such conditions suggest the need

for a more humanistic, emotional, and spiritual mediation approach capable of de-escalating disputes before they culminate in divorce.

The role of hadith values becomes highly relevant in this context, as the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW not only articulate the ethics of marital relations but also present a model of mediation that is gentle, objective, and oriented toward public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). The gap between modern mediation and the principles of *iṣlāḥ* in the hadith highlights the necessity of methodological integration. Modern mediation emphasizes communication and negotiation techniques, whereas the hadith tradition underscores moral refinement,

emotional regulation, and empathy as the foundation of reconciliation (Fahri, 2021). Integrating these two perspectives has the potential to produce a more comprehensive and effective model of Islamic family mediation that aligns with the cultural and religious character of Indonesian Muslim society.

This study aims to describe reconciliation-related hadiths pertinent to resolving domestic conflicts, analyze the concept of mediation from a hadith perspective, and assess the contribution of the Sunnah in enhancing contemporary family mediation practices. The research seeks to enrich the literature on Islamic Family Law through an integrative analysis connecting scriptural sources with contemporary mediation theories. It also addresses a notable research gap: the limited systematic integration of hadith values as ethical and spiritual foundations within modern mediation frameworks. Accordingly, this study offers a conceptual model of family reconciliation grounded in scriptural principles (*nash*) that can be applied in religious mediation institutions and judicial settings.

Previous studies on family mediation have generally focused on therapeutic communication techniques and psychology-based counseling models (Nurasri, 2023; Rahmiati et al., 2024; Silawati et al., 2025). Meanwhile, hadith-based studies on reconciliation tend to discuss marital ethics without directly linking them to mediation methodology (Fatimah et al., 2025; Primastuti, 2025). A significant research gap emerges from the scarcity of works integrating hadith values as ethical and spiritual foundations within modern mediation practice. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by analyzing reconciliation-related hadiths and translating them into a contemporary mediation framework grounded in the principles of *iṣlāḥ*.

METHOD

The present study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach with a focus on hadith textual analysis using the *maʿānī al-ḥadīth* method (Sugiyono, 2019). The selection of hadiths follows a *mawḍūʿī* (thematic) approach, gathering all narrations related to family reconciliation, conflict resolution ethics, and the mediation practices exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Each hadith is included based on several criteria, namely thematic relevance, and clarity of historical context. The interpretation of the hadiths is enriched by

authoritative commentaries from scholars such as al-Manāwī, al-Subkī, and Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī to ensure accuracy, depth, and contextual precision. Through this process, the analysis uncovers not only normative teachings but also the emotional and social dynamics embedded in the Prophet's mediatory conduct.

The analytical procedure consists of thematic identification, ethical value mapping, and integrative synthesis. First, each matn is examined to extract principles of reconciliation such as gentleness (*rifq*), emotional regulation (*ḥilm*), objectivity, and the pursuit of public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). Second, these principles are compared and integrated with secondary data from family psychology literature and contemporary mediation studies to identify points of convergence and contemporary relevance. This multidisciplinary approach allows the study to move beyond normative interpretation toward practical applicability in modern family conflict resolution. Consequently, the resulting framework of *iṣlāḥ*-based mediation is not only grounded in the Sunnah of the Prophet but also compatible with mediation methodologies used in institutions such as the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and family counseling services.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Hadiths on Marital Reconciliation

Marital reconciliation constitutes an integral component of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in cultivating family harmony. The hadiths that convey moral guidance, ethical conduct, and mutual care between spouses demonstrate that conflict resolution is not merely a technical matter, but one rooted in the cultivation of religious character in both partners. The Prophet's SAW teachings present a gentle, humanistic, yet firm approach in preserving marital stability. Examination of the three hadiths below affirms that reconciliation is a fundamental value built through counsel, compassion, empathy, and the presence of a wise mediator.

First, the Hadith in Musnad Ahmad (Hanbal, 2001):

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ سَعِيدٍ. وَقِيلَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، عَنْ بُشَيْرِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ، عَنْ حُصَيْنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، أَنَّ عَمَةً لَهُ أَمَّتِ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي حَاجَةٍ، فَفَرَّغَتْ مِنْ حَاجَتِهَا، فَقَالَ لَهَا: "أَذَاتَ زَوْجِ أَنْتِ؟" قَالَتْ: نَعَمْ، قَالَ: "فَأَيْنَ أَنْتِ مِنْهُ؟" - قَالَ يَحْيَى: "فَكَيْفَ أَنْتِ لَهُ؟" - قَالَتْ: مَا أَلُوهُ إِلَّا مَا عَجَزْتُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: "انْظُرِي أَيْنَ أَنْتِ مِنْهُ، فَإِنَّهُ جَنْتُكَ وَنَارُكَ

"Yahya ibn Sa'id narrated to us, from Yahya ibn Sa'id. And Ya'la said: Yahya narrated to us, from Bushayr ibn Yasār, from Husayn ibn Mihshan, that his aunt once came to the Prophet SAW for a certain need. After she had finished her matter, the Prophet asked her, 'Do you have a husband?' She replied, 'Yes.' He asked again, 'How is your attitude toward him?' — Ya'la, in his narration, said: 'How do you serve him?' — She replied, 'I do not fall short (in fulfilling his rights) except in what I am unable to do.' He said, 'Then be mindful of how you are with him, for he is your paradise and your hellfire.'"

Al-Manāwī explains that the statement "*unẓurī ayna anti minhu*" is a call for introspection regarding the wife's quality of interaction with her husband. The Prophet's question is not accusatory but rather encourages the wife to assess whether she contributes to harmony or drifts away from the ideals of a healthy relationship. The phrase "*fa innahu jannatuki wa nāruki*" implies that a wife's treatment of her husband may lead to reward or sin depending on how she upholds ethical conduct within the bounds of the Sharī'ah (al-Munawi, 1356). Crucially, al-Manāwī argues that this hadith does not legitimize absolute male dominance; instead, it situates marital relations within the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* (living together honorably).

This hadith underscores a reconciliation principle rooted in moral awareness. The Prophet's advice highlights the importance of building better communication and strengthening emotional interaction within the household. Efforts toward reconciliation begin with the willingness of both partners to reevaluate their respective roles and contributions. This teaching does not frame the relationship in a rigid hierarchy; instead, it emphasizes mutual responsibility. The woman in the hadith is not reprimanded but gently guided to recognize that the harmony of the marriage is significantly shaped by the efforts she contributes within reasonable and realistic limits. The reconciliatory dimension of this hadith reflects a form of internal mediation, where the Prophet encourages her self-awareness so she can more proactively nurture her relationship. These principles align with modern mediation approaches that prioritize self-awareness, personal responsibility, and non-confrontational communication. Contemporary studies show that family conflict can be reduced through empowerment strategies. Khalifian confirm that effective reconciliation often begins with

emotional behavior change before any formal intervention takes place (Khalifian et al., 2024).

Second, the Hadith in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (ibn al-Hajjaj, 1433):

حدثنا أبو عاصم عن عبد الحميد بن جعفر حدثني عمران بن أبي أنس عن عمر بن الحكم عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "لا يفرك مؤمن مؤمنة، إن كره منها خلقًا رضي منها آخر." "Abu 'Āṣim narrated to us, from 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Ja'far, who narrated to me from 'Imrān ibn Abī Anas, from 'Umar ibn al-Ḥakam, from Abu Hurayrah, who said: The Messenger of Allah SAW said, 'A believing man (husband) should not hate a believing woman (wife). If he dislikes one trait in her, he will surely be pleased with another trait.'"

Scholars explain that the prohibition "*lā yafruk*" is not one of legal prohibition (*taḥrīm*) but rather an indication that total hatred is unrealistic. Human beings possess diverse characteristics, and every spouse inevitably has shortcomings. The commentaries emphasize tolerance, emotional composure, and patience in dealing with a partner's temperament (al-Yahshubi, 1998). The phrase "*raḍiya minhā ākhara*" teaches a method of reconciliation grounded in appreciation, maintaining focus on the partner's positive traits so that conflicts do not escalate into hostility.

This hadith emphasizes that restoring harmony in marriage is closely linked to one's ability to manage perceptions about their spouse. Rather than expecting flawless behavior, the hadith invites couples to adopt a balanced view, recognizing both strengths and imperfections as part of a realistic relationship. The Prophet's guidance reflects a form of preventive mediation, a gentle intervention designed to address tensions before they escalate into more serious conflict (Farida et al., 2025). The appreciative principle conveyed in this hadith aligns with modern family mediation approaches that encourage positive and constructive communication. Research in family psychology shows that couples who can notice and value the strengths of their partners tend to develop better resilience when facing conflict. Appreciating a partner's diverse qualities becomes an important foundation for long-term marital stability. Within the broader context of reconciliation, this hadith promotes emotional regulation and a more objective mindset, enabling disagreements to be managed early and preventing them from growing into larger problems.

Third, the Hadith in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (al-Bukhari, 1311):

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ قَالَ: مَا كَانَ لِعَلِيٍّ اسْمٌ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَبِي تَرَابٍ، وَإِنْ كَانَ لَيَفْرَحُ بِهِ إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهَا، جَاءَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْتَ فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ، فَلَمْ يَجِدْ عَلِيًّا فِي الْبَيْتِ، فَقَالَ: (أَيْنَ ابْنُ عَمٍّ). فَقَالَتْ: كَانَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ شَيْءٌ، فَاغْضَبَنِي فَخَرَجَ فَلَمْ يَقُلْ عُنْدِي، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِإِنْسَانٍ: (انْظُرْ أَيْنَ هُوَ). فَجَاءَ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هُوَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ رَاقِدٌ، فَجَاءَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهُوَ مُضْطَجِعٌ. قَدْ سَقَطَ رِذَاؤُهُ عَنْ شِقِّهِ فَأَصَابَ تَرَابٌ، فَجَعَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَمْسَحُهُ عَنْهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: (فُمْ أَبَا تَرَابٍ، قُمْ أَبَا تَرَابٍ).

“Qutaybah ibn Sa’id narrated to us: ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Abī Ḥāzim narrated to us, from Abū Ḥāzim, from Sahl ibn Sa’d, who said: There was no name more beloved to ‘Alī than *Abū Turāb* (‘Father of Dust’). He truly rejoiced when addressed by this name. One day, the Messenger of Allah SAW came to the house of Fāṭimah, but he did not find ‘Alī there. He asked, ‘Where is your cousin (your husband)?’ Fāṭimah replied, ‘Something happened between me and him. He became upset with me and left, and thus he did not take his midday nap (*qaylūlah*) here.’ The Prophet SAW then said to someone, ‘Go and see where he is.’ The person returned and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, he is in the mosque, sleeping.’ The Prophet SAW went to ‘Alī, who was lying down. His cloak had fallen off his side, and dust had settled on him. The Prophet SAW began wiping the dust from him, saying, ‘Get up, O Abū Turāb, get up, O Abū Turāb.’”

Ibn Battal explain that the Prophet’s SAW behavior toward ‘Alī represents tenderness, gentle humor, and deeply affectionate emotional presence. He did not rebuke ‘Alī, did not blame Fāṭimah, and did not expose the fault of either party. Calling him “Abū Turāb” reflects the Prophet’s communicative style; soothing the atmosphere, easing psychological tension, and restoring ‘Alī’s emotional state. Classical commentaries further clarify that this hadith establishes the permissibility of resting in the mosque and illustrates the Prophet’s noble character toward his family: gentleness, empathy, and avoidance of cornering those in conflict (Ibn Baṭṭāl, 2003).

This hadith demonstrates a model of reconciliation through direct mediation, wherein a mediator approaches the emotionally withdrawn party (Nurasri, 2023). The Prophet SAW deliberately chose to go to ‘Alī first to calm the situation, offering a subtle signal for him to return home. The Prophet’s use of humor, physical reassurance, and affectionate address served as de-escalation strategies. Reconciliation occurred without coercion, confrontation, or shaming either party. This method aligns with modern mediation principles such as neutrality

and empathic presence. Effective reconciliation requires a mediator capable of creating emotional safety for both sides (Karmuji, 2016). The hadith illustrates that resolving family conflict does not always require lengthy dialogue; sometimes, gentle presence and empathy are sufficient to diffuse tension. The Prophet’s SAW approach shows that family conflict resolution must uphold the dignity of the emotionally affected party while rekindling warmth within the relationship.

Taken together, these three hadiths reveal three fundamental models of marital reconciliation in the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW: Reconciliation through moral self-reflection, Reconciliation through emotional regulation and appreciative perception, And Reconciliation through the empathic presence of a mediator. These models demonstrate that conflict resolution is not merely a legal process but one rooted in emotional education, positive communication, and mutual respect. Collectively, they form the foundational principles for developing an Islamic family mediation model that is humanistic, preventive, and oriented toward *maṣlaḥah* (public benefit).

2. Principles of Mediation in the Sunnah of the Prophet

Mediation practices in the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW rest upon foundational values of justice, objectivity, conflict prevention, prioritization of public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*), and moderation in all forms of dispute resolution. The hadiths that depict the Prophet’s SAW responses to marital tension demonstrate that conflict resolution is not merely a technical method, but a manifestation of ethical principles rooted deeply in prophetic teachings. These principles appear explicitly and implicitly in his interactions with the Companions, particularly in cases involving marital disputes. An interpretive analysis of the three central hadiths—counsel to a woman regarding her marital relationship, guidance on emotional regulation and perception toward a spouse, and the “Abū Turāb” incident—reveals the enduring ethical foundations of mediation in the Sunnah.



Picture 1. *Prophetic Mediation Principles*

a. Justice and Objectivity

Justice is the most essential foundation in resolving family disputes. In the Sunnah, justice is not confined to legal rulings or the distribution of blame; rather, it encompasses neutrality, emotional impartiality, and proportional assessment of both parties. The “Abū Turāb” hadith offers a concrete illustration of how the Prophet SAW embodied justice and objectivity as a mediator.

When ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib left the house following tension between him and Fāṭimah, the Prophet SAW did not inquire about who was right or wrong, did not reprimand either party, and did not display favoritism. He approached ‘Alī with gentle words, brushed dust from his body, and addressed him with an affectionate nickname: “Rise, O Abū Turāb” (Ibn Baṭṭāl, 2003). This action demonstrates objectivity, for the Prophet SAW did not shame ‘Alī, seek justification from Fāṭimah, or reveal any private family matter.

Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī, in *Minḥah al-Bārī*, emphasizes that the hadith exemplifies emotional justice: the Prophet SAW expressed empathy toward ‘Alī without judgment, while simultaneously preserving the dignity of Fāṭimah as the emotionally hurt spouse (Al-Anshari, 2000). His familial relationship with both of them did not diminish his objectivity as a mediator. True objectivity arises from balance, contextual awareness, and ensuring that neither party feels cornered. This concept aligns with mediation principles in family psychology, which highlight that mediators must prevent the formation of a *blaming cycle*, as conflict intensifies once a mediator is perceived as biased. The “Abū Turāb” incident shows that the Prophet’s SAW objectivity neutralized defensive emotions and opened a pathway toward reconciliation.

b. Conflict Prevention

Conflict prevention is a central element of mediation in the Sunnah. The hadith “*lā yafruk mu’minun mu’minah*” articulates a preventive strategy through emotional and perceptual regulation. The Prophet SAW instructed spouses to avoid total aversion; when noticing a partner’s flaw, one should simultaneously recall their virtues.

The statement “*If he dislikes one trait in her, he will be pleased with another*” represents the earliest form of conflict resolution; preventing the seeds of resentment from developing into major discord. The focus of the hadith is emotional stability, ensuring that minor issues do not escalate into marital crises. Subkī’s interpretation in *Ikmāl al-Mu’lam* notes that this hadith is not a legal prohibition, but a reminder that absolute hatred contradicts prophetic character and is unrealistic within married life (al-Yahshubi, 1998). Every individual possesses strengths and weaknesses; overemphasizing one dimension leads to emotional imbalance.

The conflict-prevention principle in this hadith corresponds directly with *conflict prevention* approaches in modern family relationship theory. Marital stability is built through *positive sentiment override*, a psychological tendency to view one’s partner more positively than negatively (Huwae, 2025). The Sunnah introduced this concept centuries earlier by teaching restraint from excessive focus on deficiencies.

This preventive method indicates that mediation in the Sunnah is not solely reactive. Mediation begins long before conflict escalates, aiming to cultivate a peaceful disposition, emotional patience, and clarity in approaching one’s partner. Preventive conflict management functions as an inner form of mediation, wherein individuals regulate their own emotions to preserve family harmony.

c. Prioritizing Family Welfare (Maṣlaḥah)

The principle of *maṣlaḥah* serves as the primary orientation of every mediation effort in the Sunnah. The hadith concerning the woman who asked the Prophet SAW about her relationship with her husband illustrates that mediation is not merely about resolving disputes, but about safeguarding the overall continuity and well-being of the family. When the woman explained that she served her husband to the best of her ability, the Prophet SAW directed her attention to the value of *maṣlaḥah*: to be mindful of one’s position toward one’s spouse, for the

marital relationship has consequences for both worldly happiness and the hereafter.

Al-Manāwī's interpretation in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr* clarifies that the statement "*fa innahu jannatuki wa nāruki*" is a moral reminder, not a declaration of subordination. The meaning conveyed is that the household offers a tremendous opportunity for reward when managed with justice, goodness, and responsibility. This message reflects the orientation toward *maṣlaḥah*, namely preserving a stable family structure based on mutual protection and benevolence. In this context, family *maṣlaḥah* comprises three dimensions: psychological welfare, social welfare, and spiritual welfare (Alfiyah & Anshori, 2025). Psychological *maṣlaḥah* emerges through emotional calm and mutual appreciation; social *maṣlaḥah* appears through the preservation of the family as a vital social unit; spiritual *maṣlaḥah* arises through the devotional value embedded in nurturing relationships.

The principle of *maṣlaḥah* is the central axis of marital conflict resolution in Islamic tradition. The Prophet's hadiths demonstrate that *maṣlaḥah* is the reason reconciliation is prioritized over separation whenever disputes remain manageable. It is this *maṣlaḥah*-oriented ethos that gives mediation in the Sunnah its constructive rather than punitive character. The Prophet SAW did not employ rigid legalism; instead, he applied a *maṣlaḥah*-based approach that considered the feelings, conditions, and capacities of the disputing parties.

d. Moderation and Avoiding Harm (Maḍarrah)

Moderation is a distinctive principle of mediation in the Sunnah of the Prophet. His approach to resolving marital conflict consistently followed a middle path between firmness and gentleness. The "Abū Turāb" hadith illustrates that he neither judged 'Alī nor sided with Fāṭimah, nor did he pressure them into immediate reconciliation through formal dialogue. He adopted a moderate approach: calming the partner who had withdrawn and allowing space for emotional recovery. Moderation is also evident in the hadith "*lā yafruk mu'minun mu'minah*," where the Prophet SAW teaches that one should not expect absolute perfection in a spouse. The principle of moderation teaches that a household cannot be managed through extremes, neither excessive demands nor complete neglect.

Moderation forms the basis for avoiding harm. Households governed by extreme attitudes often breed emotional stress, cycles of blame, and

verbal aggression. The Prophet SAW consistently prevented harm through soothing and dignifying actions. His gesture of brushing dust from 'Alī's body symbolizes the removal of tension; addressing him with a tender nickname reduces emotional resistance; and refraining from mentioning the faults of either party prevents social harm within the family.

A moderate approach reduces defensiveness between spouses and accelerates reconciliation. The Sunnah demonstrates that effective mediation must avoid all forms of *maḍarrah*; whether psychological harm, relational harm, or social harm. Approaches that belittle a spouse, expose private matters, or confront mistakes harshly were never practiced by the Prophet SAW. Instead, he employed gentle, empathetic, and wise methods.

The mediation principles in the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW show that family conflict resolution must be guided by objective justice, early conflict prevention, prioritization of family *maṣlaḥah*, and moderation that eliminates harm. The hadiths examined reveal the Prophet's readiness to act as a wise mediator using balanced emotional, psychological, and ethical approaches. These principles form a strong foundation for developing Islamic family mediation models and provide ethical guidelines for all efforts aimed at preserving marital harmony.

3. Integrating Hadith Concepts into Contemporary Mediation Models

Integration of prophetic mediation principles into contemporary mediation frameworks offers a transformative approach for building family dispute-resolution models that are ethically grounded, psychologically informed, and socially responsive. Modern mediation frequently emphasizes structured processes, communication techniques, and facilitator neutrality. Meanwhile, the Sunnah provides an ethical-psychological foundation that predates and reinforces these modern constructs. When viewed closely, the four core principles of prophetic mediation align strongly with contemporary mediation theory but add deeper moral and spiritual dimensions that enrich its practical application. The integration of these principles is not a mere harmonization of ancient and modern ideas; it is a methodological refinement in which ethical clarity, emotional intelligence, and social responsibility reinforce the technical procedures of current mediation practices.

The first principle, justice and objectivity, is fundamental to professional mediation ethics worldwide. Contemporary mediation requires the mediator to maintain neutrality, avoid bias, and create a balanced environment for both parties. These expectations are explicitly codified in Indonesia's regulations, most notably in PERMA No. 1 Tahun 2016, which stipulates that mediators must act impartially and ensure that neither party dominates the discussion (Dalimunthe & Hasibuan, 2024). What distinguishes the prophetic model is the integration of emotional justice, an aspect often underdeveloped in modern frameworks. Emotional justice refers to the mediator's ability to acknowledge emotional pain without aligning with any side. In the "Abū Turāb" incident, the Prophet SAW demonstrated this by comforting 'Alī without minimizing Fāṭimah's feelings. This subtle approach is relevant for current mediation practices, particularly in the Indonesian context where family disputes often carry cultural, emotional, and social burdens.

Modern mediators trained under the KMA 498/2020 guidelines are taught to acknowledge emotions and build rapport, but the prophetic example adds a dimension of *empathetic neutrality*: expressing empathy without establishing partisan emotional alliances. This refinement helps mediators avoid the common pitfall of "pseudo-neutrality," where emotional attention given to one spouse inadvertently signals bias. By integrating prophetic emotional justice, mediators can maintain procedural neutrality while offering the emotional reassurance necessary to stabilize volatile situations. Such an approach is especially crucial in cases involving high emotional withdrawal, where one spouse is reluctant to engage. The prophetic example demonstrates that calming the emotionally disengaged party (rather than forcing dialogue) creates the psychological readiness required for productive negotiation.

The second principle, conflict prevention, represents one of the most valuable contributions of the Sunnah to contemporary mediation theory. Modern mediation primarily functions as a *reactive system*, activated once disputes escalate to formal complaint stages. However, prophetic mediation operates proactively, encouraging emotional regulation and cognitive reframing earlier in the relationship. The instruction "If he dislikes one trait in her, he will be pleased with another" cultivates a perceptual balance that aligns closely with the modern psychological concept of *positive*

sentiment override, identified in marital stability studies. Integration of this principle offers a strong preventive mechanism for Indonesian mediation practice, particularly for institutions such as the KUA, which under PMA 20/2019 is mandated to provide marriage counseling and preventive family guidance (Dalimunthe & Hasibuan, 2024).

By embedding preventive prophetic principles into the *Bimbingan Perkawinan* (Pre-Marital and Marriage Counseling) programs of KUA, mediators can encourage couples to develop emotional resilience before disputes escalate to legal intervention. Research in family psychology consistently that early internal mediation (where individuals manage their own emotional responses) reduces conflict persistence and increases marital satisfaction. The prophetic method establishes cognitive-emotional balance as a religious and moral imperative, strengthening the internal motivation for conflict prevention. Integrating this model into KUA programs would allow preventive mediation to be culturally rooted, spiritually meaningful, and psychologically effective.

The third principle, prioritization of family *maṣlaḥah*, strengthens the normative basis of mediation by framing reconciliation not merely as compromise, but as a pursuit of holistic welfare. Contemporary mediation theory, despite its psychological insights, remains heavily procedural in legal contexts (Lindsey & Danbury, 2024). The prophetic model, however, frames reconciliation as an ethical project concerned with psychological, social, and spiritual well-being. This broader framing aligns with the ideal goals of marital mediation in Indonesia, where family well-being extends beyond the settlement of disputes to include preservation of kinship networks, emotional security of children, and communal stability.

Maṣlaḥah-oriented mediation can complement the limitations of purely procedural mediation found in PERMA-based proceedings. While PERMA No. 1/2016 ensures that every divorce case goes through mandatory mediation, its orientation remains focused on reaching agreement rather than nurturing the long-term health of the family unit (Syaifudin, 2017). Incorporating prophetic *maṣlaḥah* shifts the focus from agreement-making to welfare-building. Mediators trained in *maṣlaḥah* principles will evaluate reconciliation in terms of emotional readiness, potential for long-term harmony, and the moral-spiritual significance of preserving the marriage. This does not imply forcing reconciliation, as the Prophet SAW

himself did not enforce it when reconciliation was no longer beneficial. Instead, *maṣlaḥah* deepens the mediator's evaluation criteria and provides an ethical compass to assess whether reconciliation will genuinely serve the couple's well-being.

Furthermore, *maṣlaḥah* provides the philosophical grounding needed to integrate mediation into pre-litigation interventions. Under PMA 20/2019, KUA personnel act as frontline mediators for marital distress cases (Nahda et al., 2025). Their role can be greatly enhanced through a *maṣlaḥah*-based approach that values the preservation of the family as a form of social and spiritual protection, but without compromising the dignity or safety of either spouse. This balanced orientation ensures that mediation encourages stability while avoiding pressure that may perpetuate harmful relationships.

The fourth principle, moderation and avoiding harm (*maḍarrah*), offers an advanced ethical dimension seldom elaborated in modern mediation frameworks. Contemporary mediation emphasizes neutrality and communication skills, yet often lacks explicit guidance on avoiding psychological or relational harm. Prophetic mediation addresses this clearly: the mediator must neither exacerbate emotional wounds nor expose private matters. The Prophet SAW consistently practiced moderation by avoiding extremes, neither ignoring conflict nor forcing immediate resolution. This is compatible with modern conflict de-escalation strategies, which advocate gradual engagement and emotional pacing, rather than pressing parties into premature negotiation.

In practical terms, moderation can be integrated into Indonesia's structured mediation processes by adjusting mediation pacing and widening acceptable mediator interventions. KMA 498/2020 allows mediators to use separate sessions (*kaukus*) to address imbalanced emotional states. Integrating prophetic moderation encourages mediators to utilize separate sessions not merely as technical tools, but as compassionate strategies to ensure emotional safety. Moderation also informs the cultural sensitivity needed to address Indonesian family disputes, which often involve extended kinship ties, social expectations, and financial pressures. By adopting prophetic moderation, mediators can avoid rigid proceduralism that increases psychological strain, ensuring that mediation remains a healing process rather than a legal formality.

A cohesive integration of the four prophetic principles reveals a comprehensive framework for contemporary Islamic family mediation. The prophetic model addresses the ethical and emotional dimensions of conflict, while modern mediation provides procedural structure and legal legitimacy. The combination results in what can be described as ethically grounded procedural mediation, a hybrid model where the values of the Sunnah animate the technical steps of modern practice.

In institutional terms, integration can occur across several layers. At the conceptual level, mediation training curricula (particularly in KUA, the Pengadilan Agama, and community counseling programs) can incorporate the four prophetic principles as foundational ethical guidelines. At the procedural level, mediators can apply prophetic objectivity to strengthen neutrality, prophetic conflict prevention to emphasize emotional education in premarital and marital programs, prophetic *maṣlaḥah* to enrich reconciliation objectives, and prophetic moderation to enhance sensitivity in de-escalation methods. At the policy level, the alignment between prophetic ethics and national regulations supports the development of complementary mediation modules that respect legal frameworks while enriching them with Islamic ethical values. PERMA, KMA, and PMA regulations provide the necessary institutional scaffolding; the Sunnah provides the moral-psychological substance.

The final implication of integrating prophetic mediation into modern frameworks is the development of a humanistic Islamic mediation model; a model that is preventive rather than merely corrective, empathetic rather than confrontational, and ethically purposeful rather than procedurally mechanical. Such a model is urgently needed as Indonesia faces rising divorce rates and increasingly complex family dynamics. By grounding mediation in the ethical and emotional wisdom of the Sunnah while utilizing modern techniques and institutional guidelines, Indonesia can cultivate a mediation system that not only resolves disputes, but also strengthens families, empowers couples, and nurtures social harmony.

CONCLUSION

The hadiths on marital reconciliation and the four prophetic mediation principles (justice and objectivity, conflict prevention, *maṣlaḥah*-oriented decision-making, and moderation that avoids harm) can be formulated as an ethical-

psychological framework that strengthens modern family mediation models. Theoretically, this study contributes by offering a model of “ethically grounded procedural mediation,” positioning the Sunnah not only as a normative reference but also as an analytical lens for designing family conflict-resolution strategies. Practically, the findings provide direction for the Religious Courts and KUA to enhance the implementation of PERMA No. 1/2016, KMA 498/2020, and PMA 20/2019 by integrating prophetic values into mediator training, premarital education, and non-litigation counseling programs. Future research may involve empirical studies (such as observing mediation sessions and conducting interviews with mediators and couples) to test the practical effectiveness of prophetic-based mediation approaches. The key contribution of this study lies in bridging classical hadith scholarship with contemporary mediation theory, resulting in an Islamic family mediation model that is more humanistic, preventive, and aligned with current societal needs.

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