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Mass Marriage Matchmaking at *Pesantren*: An Integration of Hadith and Sociological Perspectives

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Abstract

Marriage in Islamic boarding schools plays a crucial role in shaping students' religious, social, and moral character. At Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan, marriage is part of the developmental program for mentally and spiritually prepared students. A distinctive feature is the absence of direct acquaintance between prospective spouses; sometimes, they only view each other's photographs during administrative procedures. This study aims to understand the matchmaking mechanism at Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan and analyze it from the perspectives of hadith and sociology. This research adopts a qualitative phenomenological approach. Data were collected on-site at Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and literature review. Purposive sampling was employed to select key informants. Data analysis involved data reduction, information simplification, and conclusion drawing. The study reveals three main findings. First, the initial mass marriage practice proceeded without a *taaruf* process, with the pesantren directly assigning couples. Second, over time, acquaintances via photographs emerged before the solemnization, and some students began proposing independently. Third, based on *hadith*, *taaruf* and viewing one's prospective spouse are encouraged to foster family harmony. From a sociological standpoint, using Talcott Parsons's AGIL framework, the practice without *taaruf* remains effective through social norm adaptation, collective goal attainment, structural integration, and preservation of the Pesantren's traditional values.

[Pernikahan di pesantren memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk karakter keagamaan, sosial, dan moral siswa. Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan, pernikahan merupakan bagian dari program pengembangan bagi siswa yang siap secara mental dan spiritual. Ciri khasnya yakni tidak ada pengenalan langsung antara calon pasangan; sering kali, mereka hanya melihat foto satu sama lain selama prosedur administrasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami mekanisme perjodohan di Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan dan menganalisisnya dari perspektif hadits dan sosiologi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif fenomenologis. Data dikumpulkan di lokasi Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipan, dan tinjauan pustaka. Pengambilan sampel secara purposif digunakan untuk memilih informan kunci. Analisis data melibatkan reduksi data, penyederhanaan informasi, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan tiga (3) temuan utama. Pertama, praktik pernikahan massal awal berlangsung tanpa proses *taaruf*, dengan pesantren yang secara langsung menugaskan pasangan. Kedua, seiring waktu, pengenalan melalui foto muncul sebelum akad nikah, dan beberapa santri mulai melamar secara mandiri. Ketiga, berdasarkan *hadits*, *taaruf* dan melihat calon

pasangan dianjurkan untuk menumbuhkan keharmonisan keluarga. Berdasarkan sudut pandang sosiologis menggunakan kerangka AGIL Talcott Parsons, praktik tanpa *taaruf* tetap efektif melalui adaptasi norma sosial, pencapaian tujuan kolektif, integrasi struktural, dan pelestarian nilai-nilai tradisional pesantren.]

Keywords: matchmaking; mass marriage; pesantren; *hadith*; sociological perspective

Introduction

One of the primary directives in Islamic law is the command to marry, accompanied by a prohibition against *zina* (adultery).¹ In this context, marriage is not merely viewed as a social tradition or ritual, but as an integral part of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid asy-syarī'ah*), namely the preservation of life and the continuity of future generations.² Marriage brings together two individuals with different upbringings and educational backgrounds, resulting in varying perspectives, characters, and personalities between them.³

Marriage is a firm bond (*miṣāqan ghalīẓan*) between two individuals who choose to live their lives together.⁴ This union is founded on love, compassion, and tranquillity (*sakīnah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*), the main pillars of their life journey together.⁵ Studies indicate that individuals committed to relationship stability are likelier to prioritize emotional regulation to establish and maintain a harmonious

¹ Wahyu Wibisana, "Pernikahan Dalam Islam," *Seikat: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik Dan Hukum* 1, no. 1 (2022): 22–28, <https://doi.org/10.55681/seikat.v1i1.97>.

² Anas Muhammad 'Awad al-Khalailah dan Abdullah Abdul Qadir, *Dirasat Ulum Al-Syariah Wa Al-Qanun*, 4 (2017): 81–95, <https://archives.ju.edu.jo/index.php/law/article/view/11446/8186>.

³ Nurul Badriyah Binti Ali, Angraini Binti Ramli, and Hakimah Binti Ahmad, "Maqāṣid Syariah in Family Institutions: Analysis of the Prenuptial Course Module in Malaysia," *Mazahib Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 19, no. 2 (2020): 247–80, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v19i2.2567>.

⁴ M. Halilurrahman and Imam Edi Supeno, "Pendangan Maqasid Al-Shari'ah Dalam Fatwa Ulama Kontemporer Tentang Nikah Misyar," *Al-Ashlah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 1, no. 1 (2022): 1–14, http://www.ejournal.iaibrahimiy.ac.id/index.php/al_ashlah/article/view/1259.

⁵ Della Riaya, Vika Laila Nor, and Ana Rahmawati, "Mengimplementasikan Konsep Sakinah, Mawadah, Warohmah Dalam Berkeluarga Berdasarkan Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Furqan: Al-Qur'an Bahasa Dan Seni* 11, no. 2 (2024): 75–84, <https://doi.org/10.69880/alfurqan.v11i2.173>.

partnership.⁶ Experts emphasize that marriage is not merely a social contract but also an emotional and spiritual commitment that fosters both partners' psychological well-being and inner peace.⁷ The family serves as an institution whose stability is organically linked to individual well-being and the community's collective well-being (*Ummah*).⁸

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have undergone significant development over time, both in rural and urban settings. Their role is no longer limited to the transmission of religious knowledge; instead, they have evolved to integrate various educational dimensions in response to the demands of contemporary society.⁹ According to Wahid Zaini, *pesantren* play a crucial role in the era of globalization. They serve as centres for the dissemination of Islamic teachings (*da'wah*), the formation of future religious scholars (*ulama*), the advancement of knowledge, and the empowerment of local communities.¹⁰

Furthermore, *pesantren* function as hubs of religious outreach and contribute to improving the social welfare of the surrounding society.¹¹ Amidst ongoing social, technological, and cultural changes, *pesantren* must be capable of developing a contextualized

⁶ Unji An et al., "Emotional Suppression and Psychological Well-Being in Marriage: The Role of Regulatory Focus and Spousal Behavior," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19020973>.

⁷ Beyzanur Bedir Akpınarlı and Sema Eryücel, "Marital Adjustment, Spiritual Well-Being, and Locus of Control in Married Couples," *Religions* 15, no. 11 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15111376>.

⁸ Sayed Sikandar Shah Haneef and Mohd Abbas Bin Abdul Razak, "Stabilizing Muslim Marriages: Some Reflections on Ethical Dimension of Family Law Reform," *Mazahib* 16, no. 1 (2017): 33, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v16i1.816>.

⁹ Husen Nurcholis Ridwan, Dika Sofyan, and Faruq Naufal Purnama, "Transformasi Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Modern," *Aliansi: Jurnal Hukum, Pendidikan Dan Sosial Humaniora* 2, no. 3 (2025): 163–86, <https://journal.appihi.or.id/index.php/Aliansi/article/view/909>.

¹⁰ Zainal A. Rahawarin, "Pesantren as the Basis of Development of Political Ideology in the Digital Era," *Dinamika Ilmu* 19, no. 2 (2019): 363–75, <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v19i2.3917>.

¹¹ Arief Hendra Kurniawan et al., "The Effectiveness of Information Technology-Based Student Entrepreneurship Competencies in Islamic Boarding Schools," *Tadbir: Jurnal Studi Manajemen Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022): 103, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jsmp.v6i1.4662>.

understanding of religion that aligns with modern realities, while maintaining the traditional values that form their foundational ethos.¹² Pesantren holds functional responsibilities and strategic roles that must be adapted to the evolving dynamics of society, national life, and ever-changing state policies.¹³

Marriage within the context of pesantren holds significant value, encompassing religious, social, and educational dimensions. As traditional Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, pesantren often serve as centres for character formation and the deep internalization of religious values.¹⁴ Every component within the pesantren environment contributes to shaping the character of the *santri* (students).¹⁵ In this context, Islamic teachings view marriage as integral to moral and spiritual development. As character laboratories, Pesantren not only moulds individuals within their internal environment but also exerts a broader influence for the benefit of society.¹⁶

Among the pesantren that organize marriages is Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan. From its inception, this pesantren has implemented a marriage program for its students who have reached the appropriate age for marriage. The first marriage ceremony held at the Balikpapan pesantren took place in 1977, involving two couples: Abdul Qadir Jailani and Nurhayati, and Sarbini Natsir and Salmiyah.¹⁷ This activity has continued regularly over the years, initially involving

¹² Mita Silfiasari and Ashif Az Zhafi, "Peran Pesantren Dalam Pendidikan Karakter Di Era Globalisasi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* 5, no. 1 (2020): 127–35, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d267/3ae1569482be087013e4709d75ce4cdace97.pdf>.

¹³ Anggun Diah Amanda, Luthfi Salim, and Ahmad Zarkasi, "The Role of Pesantren in Shaping the Social-Religious Identity of the Community (Studi of Pesantren Al-Amin Nusantara Bumi Nabung)," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi Dan Humaniora* 16, no. 1 (2025): 47–57, <https://doi.org/10.26418/j-psh.v16i1.90248>.

¹⁴ Ridwan, Sofyan, and Purnama, "Transformasi Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Modern."

¹⁵ Muhammad Hifdil Islam and Abd Aziz, "Transformation of Pesantren in Maintaining Good Character," *HUMANISTIKA : Jurnal Keislaman* 6, no. 1 (2020): 35–48, <https://doi.org/10.55210/humanistika.v6i1.307>.

¹⁶ Syahrul, "Tanggung Jawab Sosial Pesantren: Studi Pada Pondok Pesantren Al-Munawwarah Pondidaha, Konawe," *Shautut Tarbiyah* 37 (2017): 120–34, <https://doi.org/10.31332/str.v23i2.902>.

¹⁷ Abdurrahman et al., "Tinjauan Sosiologi Hukum Terhadap Pernikahan Mubarakah Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan," *Cahaya Mandalika*, 2023, 2094–102, <https://ojs.cahayamandalika.com/index.php/jcm/article/view/2534/2447>.

only four couples, but gradually expanding to dozens, eventually becoming an established tradition within the pesantren.¹⁸ In 1991, the number of marriages recorded at the pesantren reached 47 couples; by 1997, this number had increased to 100.¹⁹ It marked the highest number of marriages in the history of the pesantren. Marriage at the pesantren has since become a tradition and continues to be practised today. To this day, the tradition of marriage remains well-preserved. From 1977 to 2024, 35 wedding ceremonies have been conducted, involving 908 couples.

One of the unique characteristics of the marriages conducted at the pesantren is that the prospective bride and groom do not know each other until the day of the wedding. Despite this, these marriages are generally harmonious, filled with *mawaddah* (affection) and *rahmah* (compassion). Although a few divorce cases have occurred, the number remains very low. It suggests that even with an unconventional approach, marital relationships can remain strong due to the spiritual and social values cultivated within the pesantren environment. This approach emphasizes trust in the process established by the pesantren, which prioritizes spiritual principles and religious education in forming marital bonds. This topic is of particular interest for academic research, with the following research questions:

(1) What is the marriage mechanism implemented at Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan? (2) How can the matchmaking mechanism practised at Hidayatullah Pesantren be examined from the perspective of *hadith*? (3) How can the matchmaking mechanism at Hidayatullah Pesantren be analyzed sociologically?

Methods

In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a method that focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of social phenomena or human behaviour. This study specifically utilized a field research design, which involves collecting

¹⁸ Nurul Fathiyatul Mufidah and Andi Agustang, "Studi Sosiologi Pernikahan Mubarak Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Makassar," *Jurnal Sosialisasi: Jurnal Hasil Pemikiran, Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Keilmuan Sosiologi Pendidikan*, no. 1 (2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.26858/sosialisasi.v0i1.14131>.

¹⁹ Mansur Salbu, *Mencetak Kader: Perjalanan Abdullah Said Pendiri Hidayatullah* (Surabaya: Lentera Optima Pustaka, 2012).

data directly from sources at a specific physical location.²⁰ The research site for this study was Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School in Balikpapan, which has periodically conducted mass wedding ceremonies. An important factor in data collection is the research subject. In this study, the term subject refers to the informants, who serve as the primary data source. This research's data and data sources are divided into two categories: primary data, which includes the organizers or committee members and the participants of the marriage ceremony; and secondary data, which is obtained from literature and relevant documents. The object of this study is the marriage model practised at the Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School in Balikpapan.

The data collection techniques employed in this study consisted of three methods. The first was interviews. To obtain the necessary data, the researcher conducted interviews with participants of the marriage ceremony, using a structured interview guide. In this context, an interview is an interactive process in which one party poses questions to elicit specific information from the other.²¹ The second method was observation. The researcher consciously gathered sensory data through visual, auditory, and experiential perception. The third method was literature review, which involved collecting secondary data from sources such as books, journals, and scholarly articles. As for data processing techniques, the study employed the following steps: a) Editing, which involved checking, selecting, and verifying the completeness and accuracy of the collected data. b) Categorization refers to classifying or grouping edited data into systematic categories based on relevance and characteristics. c) Matrixing involved organizing the edited and categorized data into a matrix.²² A matrix is

²⁰ Josephine Oranga and Audrey Matere, "Qualitative Research: Essence, Types and Advantages," *Open Access Library Journal* 10, no. 12 (December 2023): 12, <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1111001>.

²¹ Essa Ali R Adhabi and Christina B Lash Anozie, "Literature Review for the Type of Interview in Qualitative Research," *International Journal of Education* 9, no. 3 (2017): 86, <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v9i3.11483>.

²² David B. Allsop et al., "Qualitative Methods with Nvivo Software: A Practical Guide for Analyzing Qualitative Data," *Psych* 4, no. 2 (June 2022): 2, <https://doi.org/10.3390/psych4020013>.

a table that presents the cross-classification of two or more dimensions, variables, or concepts relevant to the research topic.²³

Data analysis is a critical phase of the research process, conducted after a set of data has been obtained through various data collection techniques. The data analysis model employed in this study refers to the framework developed by Miles and Huberman, which emphasizes four interrelated and concurrent components: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

Results

The History of Hidayatullah Pesantren in Balikpapan

Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School Balikpapan is an Islamic educational institution in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. The pesantren is situated in the northern part of Balikpapan City, approximately 33 kilometres from the city centre toward the north, and only about 1 kilometre from the border of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency.²⁴ The pesantren occupies an area of 138 hectares, acquired through waqf (Islamic endowment), grants, and partial land purchases from the local community.²⁵ Hidayatullah Balikpapan stands out from conventional pesantren models as it focuses on formal education and is a centre for Islamic propagation (da'wah) and community-based social movements.²⁶ K.H. Abdullah Said founded Pesantren Hidayatullah in Balikpapan on Monday, 1 Muharram 1393 AH (February 5, 1973 CE). The pesantren was established in Gunung Sari, Karangrejo, and Karang Bugis in Balikpapan, before relocating to Gunung Tembak in 1976. The

²³ Susana Verdinelli and Norma I. Scagnoli, "Data Display in Qualitative Research," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 12, no. 1 (2013): 359–81, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/160940691301200117>.

²⁴ Paryadi and Zikri Darussamin, "Efektifitas Pernikahan Mubarakah Di Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan Dalam Tinjauan Maqashid Syariah," *Cross-Border* 5, no. 2 (2022): 1571–91, <https://journal.iaisambas.ac.id/index.php/Cross-Border/article/view/1408>.

²⁵ Paryadi Hardani and Sofia, "Upaya Membangun Keutuhan Keluarga Di Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan Menurut Tinjauan Maqasid Syariah," *Adiba* 2, no. 4 (2022): 539–53, <https://adisampublisher.org/index.php/adiba/article/view/200/204>.

²⁶ Firman Firman et al., "Realitas Pembelajaran Konten Keislaman Dan Keindonesiaan Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan," *Al-Qalam* 26, no. 1 (2020): 155, <https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v26i1.817>.

institution was officially inaugurated by the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Mukti Ali, M.A.²⁷

The Purpose of Marriage at Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School

Two primary objectives drive the marriage institution at Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School. *First*, it seeks to facilitate the marriage process for its students, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Abdullah Said stated:

“He asserted that facilitating access to marriage can serve as a preventive measure against acts of fornication (zina). In contrast, making marriage requirements unnecessarily burdensome—such as setting an excessively high dowry (mahar)—can become a significant barrier to marriage, potentially increasing the likelihood of immoral behavior. Setting a dowry that is too high, for example IDR 5 million in 1991, is viewed as unrealistic and contrary to Islamic principles that prioritize ease and simplicity in the marriage process. Such demands also fail to consider the economic realities of individuals, particularly young men or students (santri) who may only have access to modest sources of income.”²⁸

Second, marriage is seen as a means to disseminate Islamic values and contribute to establishing an Islamic civilization. This objective was explicitly stated by the founder, K.H. Abdullah Said, who asserted:

“The collapse of morality and the degradation of character essentially stem from the institution of marriage. The current model of marriage has become an almost complete imitation of Western culture, influenced as well by satanic temptations. From premarital relationships, known as dating, to post-marital celebrations that culminate in extravagant festivities—none of these practices are rooted in Islamic teachings. Neither the Qur’an, nor the hadith, nor scholarly consensus permits dating. Especially not the modern form of dating, which involves intentionally seeking out dimly lit places, spending time alone in

²⁷ Salbu, *Mencetak Kader: Perjalanan Abdullah Said Pendiri Hidayatullah*.

²⁸ Salbu.

intimate settings, whispering, and making various personal promises.”²⁹

K.H. Abdullah Said's statement highlights the concern that contemporary marriages in wider society often begin with dating—a practice viewed as morally damaging. Consequently, the institution of marriage at Hidayatullah is not only a religious practice but also a moral response. It aims to provide an alternative model of marriage that aligns with Islamic ethics and counters prevalent societal norms that are seen to erode moral and spiritual values.

The Partner Selection Mechanism at Hidayatullah Pesantren

Since its establishment, Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School has prioritized the marriage of its students (*santri*) as an essential institutional agenda. Initially, marriages were conducted individually, beginning in 1974. This practice evolved in 1977 with the first group marriage involving two couples: Abdul Qadir Jailani with Nurhayati, and Sarbini Nasir with Salmiyah.³⁰ These events laid the foundation for subsequent group weddings.³¹ K.H. Abdullah Said envisioned and initiated mass marriage ceremonies, starting with four couples and progressively increasing to dozens of pairs. In 1991, the number of couples reached 47; in 1994, it rose to 61. The mass wedding celebrations gained national attention and were attended by prominent figures, including B.J. Habibie. By 1997, the number had reached 100 couples. This tradition has remained consistently practised to the present day. From 1977 to 2022, 30 mass marriage events were held, involving 804 couples. As of 2024, the total number of marriage participants at Hidayatullah Pesantren has reached 908 couples.

Marriage partners play a crucial role in human life. Everyone desires a life companion to share and navigate life with. The concept of a life partner is not only tied to personal needs but is also shaped by social, cultural, and spiritual factors. In the matchmaking system

²⁹ Salbu.

³⁰ Mufidah and Agustang, “Studi Sosiologi Pernikahan Mubarak Di Pondok Pesantren Hidayatullah Makassar.”

³¹ Paryadi, “Model Penjodohan Pada Pernikahan Mubarakah Dalam Membentuk Keluarga Sakinah Di Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan Dalam Tinjauan Maqashid Syariah” (PhD Thesis, UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2023), <https://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/70601/1/>.

applied by K.H. Abdullah Said, prospective spouses were not allowed to choose or see their future partners. Instead, they were informed of the name of the person he selected. The decision-making process was entirely entrusted to him and his wife. During the leadership of K.H. Abdullah Said, there were 12 mass weddings held at the pesantren, involving 284 participants. Of these, 9 couples eventually divorced. The participants in these weddings were students of the pesantren during K.H. Abdullah Said's era:

1. In 1977, there were 2 couples married.
2. In 1979, there were 3 couples married.
3. In 1980, 5 couples were recorded.
4. In 1983, there were 3 couples married.
5. In 1984, 3 couples were married.
6. Also in 1984, another 4 couples were married—one of these couples divorced after their children married due to incompatibility between the husband and wife.
7. In 1985, there were 12 couples married. One couple divorced after having two children.
8. In 1989, 31 couples were married. Three couples later divorced. Among them, two had no children, while one couple had three children.
9. In 1991, 47 couples married. One couple divorced.
10. In 1994, 61 couples were married. One couple divorced. Among the participants, three individuals practised polygamy and maintained stable marriages.
11. In 1996, 13 couples were married, all of whom remained together.
12. In 1997, 100 couples were married. Two couples divorced without having children. Both later remarried in subsequent mass weddings and had children.³²

Between 1977 and 1997, there were 284 recorded marriages, with 9 resulting in divorce. From the 12 groups of mass weddings, the researcher interviewed three informants. One of them was:

1. Sarbini Nasir

³² Syamsul Rijal (Member of the Steering Committee), "The Matchmaking Mechanism of the Mubarakah Wedding," September 2, 2024, Direct Interview.

Sarbini Nasir participated in the first mass wedding held in 1977, which involved two couples. He shared his experience of the matchmaking process.

“One day, K.H. Abdullah Said called him and asked his age. Sarbini replied that he was 27. K.H. Abdullah said, In that case, you must get married. Sarbini was surprised, as he wanted to focus on his studies. However, he followed the advice and responded with *sami'na wa atha'na* (we hear and obey). The engagement occurred on a Friday, and the wedding ceremony was held Saturday night. The dowry was a pocket-sized Qur'an. At the time, Sarbini was 27, while his bride, Salmiyah, was 17, making a 10-year age gap. From the engagement to the wedding, Sarbini never saw his future wife. During the dowry handover, he was confused as many female students were lined up. Finally, Ustaz Amin Mahmud pointed and said, That one is your wife.”³³

2. Abdul Majid.

Abdul Majid was one of the participants in the 1994 mass wedding, which involved 61 couples. According to Abdul Majid:

“I only learned the name of my future wife one day before the wedding, when I signed the marriage documents. I had never seen her photo or met her before. The match was arranged entirely by K.H. Abdullah Said. Only during the dowry ceremony, after the wedding, did I finally see and meet my wife, Rusmini. Although the matchmaking process seemed strict—without any introduction or meeting beforehand—Abdul Majid felt that the method used by K.H. Abdullah Said was pleasant, meaningful, and memorable.”³⁴

This couple has maintained a strong and harmonious relationship over the years. They have been blessed with three children and several grandchildren.

3. Usman Sulaiman

³³ Sarbini Nasir (Participant of the First Mubarakah Wedding), “Pairing Process,” September 18, 2024, Direct Interview.

³⁴ Abdul Majid (Participant of the First Mubarakah Wedding), “Matchmaking Process,” December 12, 2024, Direct Interview.

Usman Sulaiman was one of the participants in the 1997 mass wedding, which involved 100 couples. According to Usman, he entirely entrusted the decision of choosing a spouse to the wedding committee or the pesantren leadership.

“In the interview, Usman expressed an open and accepting attitude, placing his trust in the committee to find a suitable match. When the list of potential spouses was shown to him, he chose a woman named *Filosofia*, even though he had never met her. He felt the namesymbolized intelligence and believed she must be a smart woman. His confidence grew stronger after he had a dream in which the woman he had chosen appeared, confirming to him that she was the right partner.”³⁵

After the passing of K.H. Abdullah Said, leadership at Pesantren Hidayatullah was succeeded by K.H. Abdur Rahman Muhammad. Under his leadership, the matchmaking model was refined through individual interviews to gather information on personal identity, educational background, marital intentions, and desired partner criteria. According to interviews conducted with the pesantren administrators and the matchmaking committee:

1. Samsul Rijal, one of the administrators who has also served as a longstanding member of the marriage committee, explained the process as follows:

“The committee conducts deliberations (*musyawarah*) to determine suitable pairings, based on the individual criteria provided by each participant. Following this, the biodata and photographs of the proposed candidates are presented to the participants for consideration. If the participant agrees, they are asked to sign a consent form. In cases where a participant decides to withdraw, the committee provides counseling and seeks an alternative match. Once the match is finalized, the proposed pairing is communicated to the families of the prospective bride and groom in order to secure their support.”³⁶

³⁵ Usman (Participant of the First Mubarakah Wedding), “Matchmaking Process,” August 19, 2024, Direct Interview.

³⁶ Syamsul Rijal (Member of the Steering Committee), “The Matchmaking Mechanism of the Mubarakah Wedding,” September 2, 2024.

2. Abdul Qadir Jailani, one of the members of the steering committee and a board member of the pesantren, explained:

“In the present era, the matchmaking process has become considerably more challenging compared to the time of K.H. Abdullah Said. According to Abdul Qadir Jailani, a member of the steering committee, only K.H. Abdullah Said possessed the capacity to arrange marriages independently, without any prior *ta'aruf* (premarital acquaintance). Jailani acknowledged the considerable burden involved in determining appropriate pairings for each marriage participant. He described the process as mentally and emotionally exhausting, requiring intense deliberation and personal sacrifice, to the point of causing sleep disturbances.”³⁷

Two matchmaking models are employed to implement mass wedding ceremonies in the current era. The first model involves the committee acting as a mediator to determine and assign suitable partners. The second model allows direct proposals between prospective brides and grooms without intermediary involvement.³⁸ These two models reflect variations in the approach to the matchmaking process within the context of mass weddings organized by the institution.

The mass or “Barakah” Wedding ceremonies conducted during the leadership of K.H. Abdurrahman Muhammad, between 1998 and 2004, were held on 33 separate occasions, with 624 individuals participating as marriage partners. Among the participants in each cohort were:

1. In 1998, a total of 20 couples were recorded. Three of these couples divorced after several years of marriage.
2. In 2000, a total of 47 couples were recorded, with four couples experiencing divorce.
3. In 2001, a total of 4 couples were recorded.
4. In 2002, 48 couples were recorded, one of whom had divorced before having children.

³⁷ Abdul Qadir Jailani (Steering Committee Member), “The Matchmaking Mechanism of the Mubarakah Wedding,” September 15, 2024, Direct Interview.

³⁸ Herianto (Secretary of the Organizing Committee for the First Mubarakah Wedding), “Matchmaking Model Mechanism,” September 2024, Direct Interview.

5. Also in 2002, 9 couples were recorded, remaining intact and harmonious.
6. In 2003, a total of 44 couples were recorded. Among this cohort, two couples divorced.
7. In 2004, 6 couples were recorded, all of whom remained intact.
8. In 2006, 28 couples were recorded, all of whom remained intact.
9. In 2007, 5 couples were recorded, all remaining harmonious with no divorces.
10. In 2007, 22 couples were recorded, all remaining harmonious with no divorces.
11. In 2009, a total of 28 couples were recorded, with three couples divorcing.
12. In 2010, a total of 41 couples were recorded, with three couples divorcing.
13. In 2011, a total of 23 couples were recorded, with two couples divorcing due to incompatibility.
14. In 2013, a total of 50 couples were recorded, with two couples experiencing marital failure.
15. In 2015, a total of 35 couples were recorded, with two couples divorcing.
16. In 2016, a total of 38 couples were recorded, with three couples divorcing.
17. In 2018, a total of 43 couples were recorded, among whom five couples divorced.
18. In 2019, a total of 10 couples were recorded.
19. In 2020, 20 couples were recorded, with one couple divorcing.
20. In 2021, 29 couples were recorded, all of whom remained intact.
21. In 2022, a total of 20 couples were recorded.
22. In 2023, a total of 35 couples were recorded, with two couples divorcing.
23. In 2024, a total of 19 couples were recorded.³⁹

The total number of marriage participants from 1998 to 2024 was 624 couples, of which 33 divorced. Thus, the overall number of couples married between 1977 and 2024 amounts to 908 couples, with 42 recorded divorces, representing a divorce rate of 4.62%. Among the informants from the cohort married between 1998 and 2024 are:

³⁹ Data obtained from the Secretary of the Wedding Committee on December 14, 2024.

1. Rodiyah. Rodiyah was one of the participants in the mass marriage held in 2011.

“Following the marriage, she experienced a sense of incompatibility with her assigned spouse, as she felt that he did not meet the criteria she envisioned in an ideal partner. As an individual, Rodiyah perceived the qualities she desired in a husband—someone taller, older, and with a stable job.”

The mismatch between her expectations and the reality she encountered led to feelings of disappointment and confusion. These emotions were rooted in the gap between her idealized image of a marital partner and the actual characteristics of her spouse. The dissatisfaction she felt gradually fostered discomfort in the relationship, disrupting the harmony of their marital life. Ultimately, just three days after the marriage ceremony, Rodiyah decided to pursue a divorce.”⁴⁰

2. Supardin

Supardin, a participant in the 2013 marriage cohort, initially shared with the committee during his interview the criteria for the woman he wished to marry, including selecting a potential bride whose name he was already familiar with. He then stated:

“However, as the wedding day approached, the committee informed him that his bride-to-be had been changed to another woman named Musliana. This change caused Supardin to feel stressed. Nevertheless, the committee reassured him that Musliana was a good woman, and others also confirmed that she was a suitable match. In the end, Supardin accepted the committee’s decision and proceeded with the wedding ceremony with Musliana.”⁴¹

This couple has continued to maintain harmony and stability in their married life. They have been blessed with three children, each growing up well and thriving in a positive environment.

⁴⁰ Rodhiah (Participant of the 2011 Mubarakah Wedding), “Preferred Candidate Criteria,” September 13, 2024, phone interview.

⁴¹ Supardin (Participant of the 2011 Mubarakah Wedding), “Preferred Candidate Criteria,” September 13, 2024, direct interview.

3. Fadilah

Fadilah was a male participant who registered for the 2024 marriage program without bringing a prospective partner, hoping to be matched by the committee.

“During the interview, the committee asked Fadilah about his criteria for a spouse, such as ethnicity, hobbies, life goals, health, and motivation for joining the program. Regarding his preferences, Fadilah wanted a beautiful partner of Javanese ethnicity with good character. He also hoped to get to know the prospective bride the committee chose before the wedding. However, the committee did not approve his request and assured him that the selected partner would be the best match.”⁴²

4. Nurzaenab

One of the participants in the 2024 mass marriage was Nurzaenab. She registered without bringing a prospective partner, hoping to be matched by the committee or the pesantren administrators.

“Nurzaenab expressed her willingness to follow all the marriage procedures set by the pesantren. During an interview conducted by the committee, she shared several criteria for her ideal husband. Among them, she wished for a husband whomemorizess the Qur’an, loves seeking knowledge, is obedient to Allah and His Messenger, and possesses a strong sense of responsibility. Nurzaenab explained that these criteria are important to her because she sees a husband as the leader and role model in the household she hopes to build, as well as someone responsible for maintaining family harmony.”⁴³

The matchmaking outcome determined by the organizing committee yielded a high level of satisfaction for Nurzaenab, as the figure of Abdul Muiz Badar aligned closely with the criteria she had previously formulated for an ideal spouse. During the matchmaking process, the committee successfully facilitated a match that significantly met her expectations and preferences. The

⁴² Fadillah (Participant of the 2024 Mubarakah Wedding), “Preferred Spouse Criteria,” October 26, 2024, Direct Interview.

⁴³ Nurzainab (Participant of the 2024 Mubarakah Wedding), “Preferred Spouse Criteria,” October 28, 2024, Direct Interview.

satisfaction experienced by Nurzaenab reflects a strong alignment between her personal aspirations and the actual outcome, thereby reinforcing her confidence in the legitimacy and efficacy of the matchmaking mechanism administered by the committee.

5. Rifai

Rifai was among the participants engaged in the 2024 mass marriage program, which implemented a courtship-based mechanism. Before his official registration at the pesantren's marriage program, Rifai had initiated a formal marriage proposal to a female student who had recently completed her studies there. This proposal signified Rifai's earnest intention to establish a marital union with the selected santri.

“Nevertheless, after this courtship process, Rifai elected to participate in the mass marriage organized by the pesantren. He articulated that this decision was predicated on his commitment to comply with the institutional procedures and frameworks established by the pesantren and to garner the endorsement and prayers of the pesantren's administrative body, student cohort, and broader community. Despite having previously proposed, Rifai perceived that engagement in the formalized matchmaking process afforded a more comprehensive opportunity to deliberate on the appropriateness of a life partner, consistent with the prevailing regulatory standards and cultural norms.”⁴⁴

Discussion

Hadith Perspective

In Islam, marriage (nikah) is a fundamental social institution and act of worship that plays a crucial role in establishing a sakīnah (tranquil), mawaddah (loving), and rahmah (merciful) family.⁴⁵ Therefore, the implementation of marriage should be based on careful

⁴⁴ Rifai (Participant of the 2024 Mubarakah Wedding), “Desired Partner Criteria,” October 31, 2024, direct interview.

⁴⁵ Nur Faezah Musthapar, Raihanah Hj Azahari, and Bahiyah Ahmad, “Sakīnah, Mawaddah And Rahmah In Husband-Wife Relationship: A Literature Review,” *Jurnal Syariah* 28, no. 1 (April 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.22452/js.vol28no1.4>.

considerations to ensure harmony between husband and wife across various aspects of life—spiritual, emotional, and social.⁴⁶ Several hadiths of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explicitly recommend that prospective spouses be allowed to see or get to know one another before marriage as part of a wise decision-making process. This practice aims to prevent future conflicts and incompatibilities and ensure compatibility in character and physical condition of the prospective partners. An example of a hadith serving as a reference in this context is:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: كُنْتُ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَتَاهُ رَجُلٌ فَأَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهُ تَزَوَّجَ امْرَأَةً مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنْظَرْتَ إِلَيْهَا؟ قَالَ: لَا، قَالَ: فَادْهَبْ فَانْظُرْ إِلَيْهَا، فَإِنَّ فِي أَعْيُنِ الْأَنْصَارِ شَيْئًا. (رواه مسلم)⁴⁷

“Narrated by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him): He said, I was with the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) when a man came and informed him that he had married a woman from among the Ansar. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said to him, ‘Did you look at her?’ He replied, ‘No.’ The Prophet then said, ‘Go and look at her, for there is something in the eyes of the Ansar.’” (Reported by Muslim)

In another narration, it is explained:

عَنْ جَابِرِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِذَا خَطَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَرْأَةَ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَا يَدْعُوهُ إِلَى نِكَاحِهَا فَلْيَفْعَلْ. (رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ).⁴⁸

Narrated by Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him): The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: If

⁴⁶ Muhammad Yusuf Hidayat and Lilik Andaryuni, “Emotional Maturity in Building Household Harmony from the Perspective of Maqashid Syariah: A Study of Married Couples in Samarinda City,” *Jurnal Al-Qadau: Peradilan Dan Hukum Keluarga Islam* 10, no. 2 (December 2023): 2, <https://doi.org/10.24252/al-qadau.v10i2.44348>.

⁴⁷ Muhyiddin Yahya Bin Syaraf Nawawi, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Bisyarah An-Nawawī* (Mesir: Matbuat al-Misriyyah, 1929).

⁴⁸ Abu Daud, *Sunan Abi Daud* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 1997).

one of you proposes to a woman and is able to look at what will encourage him to marry her, then let him do so.” (Reported by Abu Dawud)

The two hadiths above indicate that Islam encourages prospective spouses to see one another before deciding to marry. According to most scholars (*jumhur ulama*), viewing a potential spouse before marriage is considered *sunnah* (recommended). This view is upheld by all four major schools of Islamic jurisprudence—Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, and Hanbali.⁴⁹ They agree that viewing a prospective spouse before marriage is *sunnah* and highly recommended, particularly to ensure physical and emotional compatibility.⁵⁰ The aforementioned hadith emphasizes the importance of this practice as a means of assessing compatibility and preventing future regret or dissatisfaction within the marital relationship.⁵¹

Ta’aruf plays a significant role in enabling prospective spouses to become acquainted with one another’s religious commitment, personality, character, and background.⁵² This process is intended to ensure compatibility both physically and psychologically. Although it does not require an extended duration, seeing or becoming familiar with one another through ta’aruf can assist both parties in gaining a deeper understanding of each other. Such premarital acquaintance—through *ta’aruf* or visual introduction—can be a strong foundation for a harmonious and enduring marital relationship.⁵³

However, within the pesantren context—such as at Hidayatullah Balikpapan—specific matchmaking models place greater emphasis on delegating the decision-making process to authoritative figures, such as

⁴⁹ Muhammad Abdurrahman Mubarakfuri, *Tuhfatul Ahwadi* (Dar al-Fikr, 2005).

⁵⁰ Faiz Maulana, Ibnu Jazari, and Abdul Wafi, “Urgensi Memilih Calon Pasangan Hidup Menurut Mazhab Imam Syafi’i Dan Imam Maliki,” *Jurnal Hikmatina* 5, no. 3 (July 2023): 3, <https://jim.unisma.ac.id/index.php/jh/article/view/21196>.

⁵¹ Nawawi, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Bisyarah An-Nawawī*.

⁵² Abdur Rohman Bihaqy Jannah and Safiatul Humaidi, “Studi Tentang Pelaksanaan Ta’aruf Sebelum Pernikahan Di Pondok Pesantren Ar-Rohmah Tahfidz Hidayatullah Islam Malang,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum Keluarga Islam*, 2023, <https://jim.unisma.ac.id/index.php/jh/article/view/20923/15576>.

⁵³ Muhammad Fayyad Hamid Wasimi and Abdul Karim, “Impeded Marriage Habits Kapisa Province, Afghanistan,” *Kulliyah Of Islamic Revealed Knowledge And Human Sciences International Islamic University Malaysia* 7, no. 1 (2023): 190–235, <https://journals.iium.edu.my/al-risalah/index.php/al-risalah/article/view/430/321>.

the pesantren leadership or designated committee. It is based on the rationale that these authorities possess a deeper understanding of the spiritual condition and religious compatibility of the individuals involved. As a result, most marriages conducted within the pesantren setting are arranged directly by the leadership or organizing committee. The prevailing marriage culture continues to follow a model in which premarital introductions or face-to-face meetings are generally absent. Although there are instances of *ta'aruf* or self-initiated proposals, such cases remain relatively rare. Despite the limited opportunity for prior acquaintance, outcomes of this matchmaking mechanism have, on average, resulted in stable and harmonious marriages. During the leadership period of K.H. Abdullah Said, for example, only a few marriages ended in divorce, specifically, 9 out of 284 couples.

During the leadership of K.H. Abdurrahman Muhammad, the matchmaking mechanism within the marriage program involved a more structured and participant-informed approach. The organizing committee first collected data concerning each participant's preferences and criteria for an ideal spouse. This information served as the foundation for the selection and matching process conducted through internal committee meetings. These deliberations aimed to align the submitted criteria with the available profiles of prospective partners. Once the committee agreed upon a match, participants were shown visual documentation (photographs) of the selected prospective spouse. If the participant felt satisfied with the proposed match, they were asked to confirm their consent by signing an official form or document, indicating their readiness to proceed to the next stage. While a few participants participated in self-initiated proposals, such cases remained uncommon.

The implementation of marriage during this second phase is regarded as more aligned with the principles articulated in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), particularly those encouraging individuals to view their prospective spouses before marriage. Participants were allowed to become acquainted with their intended partners, although this was mostly limited to photographic media. Nonetheless, some participants engaged in direct *ta'aruf* processes and, in some instances, took the initiative to submit independent marriage proposals. This mechanism reflects an effort to balance adherence to religious values and the practical and technical constraints on the ground.

Although direct interaction or personal acquaintance between prospective spouses prior to marriage is not commonly practised at Pesantren Hidayatullah—with only a small portion of participants initiating independent proposals—most couples have succeeded in establishing enduring and harmonious marital relationships. Most participants express a strong sense of trust and confidence in the decisions made by the pesantren leadership and organizing committee, grounded in the belief that the partner selection process is conducted with careful deliberation and adherence to Islamic values. The effectiveness of this approach is reflected in the relatively low divorce rate among participants of the mass marriage program organized by Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan. Out of 908 couples married through the program, only 42 have experienced divorce. This data indicates a significant success in fostering *sakīnah* (tranquil families) through the pesantren-initiated marriage model.

Marriage conducted within the pesantren aligns with the fundamental objectives of marriage itself. According to the Indonesian Marriage Law of 1974, marriage is defined as a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife, to establish a happy and eternal family (household) founded upon the principle of belief in the One Almighty God.⁵⁴ Similarly, Article 3 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam, KHI) states that the purpose of marriage is to realize a household characterized by *sakīnah* (tranquillity), *mawaddah* (love), and *rahmah* (mercy).⁵⁵

Sociological Perspective

According to Talcott Parsons, every society consists of a series of distinct subsystems, each possessing a specific structure and functional significance essential for the continuity and equilibrium of

⁵⁴ Bing Waluyo, “Sahnya Perkawinan Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan,” *Jurnal Media Komunikasi Pendidikan Pancasila Dan Kewarganegaraan* 2, no. 1 (April 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.23887/jmppkn.v2i1.135>.

⁵⁵ Hamsah Hudafi, “Pembentukan Keluarga Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Dan Kompilasi Hukum Islam,” *Al-Hurriyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (December 2020): 172–81, <https://doi.org/10.30983/alhurriyah.v5i2.3647>.

the community.⁵⁶ Parsons' structural-functional theory is influenced by biological thought, which views society analogously to an organism composed of various interdependent organs.⁵⁷ For a social system to maintain order or undergo organized change, the fulfilment of specific functional prerequisites is required. The action system is centered around three main elements: the individual, interactions among actors, and cultural patterns. Parsons emphasizes that the essential functions of a stable social system require specific rules to maintain a minimum level of stability.

From Parsons' perspective, social life can be understood as a complex system in which each element is interdependent. This interdependence is crucial for ensuring coordination among the various parts of the social system, which in turn facilitates the achievement of social stability.⁵⁸ According to Talcott Parsons, all institutions fundamentally constitute systems that require certain conditions to sustain their existence. Consequently, a system must fulfil four essential functions to maintain stability and persistence, collectively called the AGIL framework.⁵⁹ The AGIL theory proposed by Talcott Parsons offers a functionalist perspective for understanding various aspects of social life, including marriage.

AGIL is an acronym representing a social system's four essential functions to maintain social stability: Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, and Latency. Adaptation refers to how a system adjusts to its environment; Goal Attainment involves setting and achieving objectives for members of the society; Integration concerns the regulation of relationships among the parts of society to ensure harmonious functioning, whereas socialization plays a vital role in

⁵⁶ Solomon Kofi Amoah and Anthony Ayim, "The Theoretical Approaches of Durkheim, Parsons and Luhmann: Intra-Traditional Differences, Interdependencies and Contradictions," *Journal of Advocacy, Research and Education* 5, no. 3 (2018): 101–14,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342009010_The_Theoretical_Approaches_of_Durkheim_Parsons_and_Luhmann_Intra-traditional_Differences_Interdependencies_and_Contradictions.

⁵⁷ Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (Glencoe: Free Press., 1949).

⁵⁸ Evi Fatimatur Rusydiyah and Fathur Rohman, "Local Culture-Based Education: An Analysis of Talcott Parsons' Philosophy," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 12, no. 3 (2020): 1–16, <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Fathur-Rohman-5/publication/346398682>.

⁵⁹ Rusydiyah and Rohman.

maintaining social control and family unity. A minimum level of solidarity is necessary to encourage members' cooperation and prevent detrimental conflicts.⁶⁰ Latency refers to maintaining and reinforcing existing cultural patterns and individual societal motivations. This function emphasizes preserving shared values and norms that community members internally accept.⁶¹

Within the context of marriages conducted absent the *ta'aruf* process, Talcott Parsons' AGIL framework offers a cogent analytical lens. First, regarding adaptation, such matrimonial practices can be interpreted as an adaptive response to prevailing sociocultural norms, particularly within pesantren settings where matrimonial decisions are predominantly entrusted to authoritative figures or committees. Participants in these matrimonial arrangements internalize and conform to the community's social expectations and place implicit trust in the mediating agents responsible for matchmaking.⁶² The Hidayatullah pesantren demonstrates a distinctive capacity for adaptation, negotiating the complex interplay between traditional religious values, communal norms, and contemporary sociocultural pressures. Although individual agency in spousal selection is constrained within this framework, institutional mechanisms allow for limited engagement, such as the review of prospective partners' photographs and restricted *ta'aruf* interactions, thereby facilitating a moderated degree of personal adjustment within the prescribed normative boundaries.

This policy reflects an institutional adaptation strategy wherein the pesantren does not rigidly adhere to the traditional unilateral matchmaking model but opens a space for negotiation within the parameters of Islamic values. In other words, the system accommodates individual needs—such as the desire to become acquainted with a prospective partner—while preserving a collective framework that positions the institution as the primary authority responsible for the continuity and success of the marriage.

Second, Goal Attainment. A fundamental dimension of the mass marriage initiative at Pesantren Hidayatullah lies in fulfilling

⁶⁰ Nasrul Nasrul, "Implementation of Talcott Parsons' AGIL Scheme in Family and Community Education: A Case Study in the Era of Globalization," *Proceeding of International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies* 3 (August 2024): 181–84, <https://jurnal.uindatokarama.ac.id/index.php/iciis/article/view/3383>.

⁶¹ Nasrul.

⁶² Ormerod, "The History and Ideas of Sociological Functionalism."

broader socio-institutional objectives.⁶³ This program's primary goal transcends establishing stable and harmonious families grounded in Islamic principles; it also functions as a strategic intervention addressing the socioeconomic constraints of economically marginalized santri. By institutionalizing collective matrimonial ceremonies, the pesantren alleviates the customary financial barriers associated with marriage rites, thereby facilitating the dignified and equitable realization of marital unions among its constituents.

Furthermore, the program successfully fulfils the fundamental functions of marriage within society, such as reproduction, the socialization of religious values, and establishing the family unit as a foundational element of the community. Although most couples marry without undergoing an intensive *ta'aruf* process, this does not impede the achievement of the marriage's core objectives. In this context, *ta'aruf* is not regarded as an absolute prerequisite, provided that the couple shares a mutual understanding regarding family vision, Islamic values, and their respective roles and responsibilities in maintaining the household.

The efficacy of this program underscores that an institutionally mediated matrimonial system, predicated upon collective mechanisms and underpinned by religious doctrines, effectively fulfils the essential functions delineated in Talcott Parsons' social systems theory, particularly about the goal attainment function. This framework enables Pesantren Hidayatullah to consolidate its internal social cohesion while addressing broader socioeconomic disparities its santri population faces, manifesting a dual contribution to social stability and community welfare.

Third, Integration. Marriages that proceed without a formal *ta'aruf* process or extensive interpersonal interaction between prospective spouses, as typified by the mass wedding practices at Pesantren Hidayatullah, illustrate a model of social integration that is predicated less on personal intimacy and more on the convergence of shared values, normative frameworks, and collective life objectives. Within this paradigm, social integration is not contingent upon premarital interpersonal engagement. However, it is realized through

⁶³ Abdullah and Hijrah, "Contemporary Wedding in Indonesia (Study of Mubarakah Wedding at Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School, Balikpapan, East Kalimantan)," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 20, no. 1 (June 2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jhi.v20i1.6082>.

the internalization of religious doctrines and a collective commitment to the ideal of an Islamic household as promulgated by the pesantren institution. The pesantren environment is the principal locus for cultivating a shared worldview and normative understanding among the santri concerning marriage, gender roles, and familial responsibilities. Despite the absence of intensive premarital acquaintance among participants, social integration is effectively achieved through a shared educational foundation, the homogeneity of pesantren cultural norms, and sustained institutional support and socialization processes post-nuptially.

Fourth, Latency. The latency function refers to a social system's capacity to preserve and transmit the core values and norms that underpin long-term stability. In the context of marriage at Pesantren Hidayatullah, this function is manifested in the institution's ability to cultivate and sustain the values of an Islamic household, despite the absence of extended courtship or intensive premarital interaction. The pesantren plays a crucial role in imparting moral, spiritual, and social values to the santri, forming the foundational basis for marital life. Values such as obedience to Allah, spousal responsibilities, patience, and commitment to respective family roles are instilled from the educational phase and continuously reinforced through post-marriage guidance and mentorship.

Conclusion

After conducting a detailed description and analysis of the marriage practices at Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan, utilizing hadith studies and sociological perspectives as analytical frameworks, the researcher draws the following conclusions:

First, the matchmaking mechanism at Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan traditionally did not involve a formal ta'aruf process or direct viewing of prospective spouses before the marriage contract ceremony. Initially, match decisions were determined solely by the Pesantren's leader, K.H. Abdullah Said. Following his passing, the matchmaking process transitioned to a committee's management through deliberation. Prospective participants were only shown photographs of their partners when signing official documents. More recently, some participants have initiated their proposals to prospective spouses before registering with the committee as marriage participants at the Pesantren.

Second, from the hadith perspective, it is strongly recommended that prospective spouses engage in a *ta'aruf* process or mutual acquaintance prior to marriage. This procedural step ascertains compatibility, which is essential for fostering a harmonious and stable marital union. However, within the specific context of marriages conducted at Pesantren Hidayatullah Balikpapan, the customary practice of *ta'aruf* or direct observation of the prospective partner is not implemented, as the decision-making authority rests entirely with the Pesantren leadership or designated committee. Despite the absence of such direct interpersonal interaction, the primary objectives of marriage—namely, the realization of a lasting, harmonious, and *sakīnah, mawaddah, warahmah* household—are still effectively achieved through this institutional mechanism.

Third, from a sociological standpoint grounded in Parsons' AGIL framework, marriages conducted without prior acquaintance or direct observation of the prospective spouse can function effectively within the Pesantren Hidayatullah milieu. This effectiveness is observable in the system's capacity to adapt to prevailing social norms, attain collective goals, facilitate social integration within the family and broader community, and preserve and transmit shared cultural and religious values. Such marriages have the potential to yield stable and harmonious family units, provided that the spouses demonstrate the ability to conform to established social patterns and maintain a strong commitment to their marital roles and responsibilities.

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