



## **Financial Provision by Migrant Husbands and Its Impact on Family Resilience in Kampar Regency, Riau**

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**Abstract:** This article examines the complexities of family life among women whose husbands migrate for work in Kampar Regency, Riau, with a focus on how financial obligations are fulfilled and how these conditions affect family resilience in economic, social, and psychological dimensions. The study employs a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with ten informants, consisting of wives, children, and community leaders. The findings reveal that the tradition of migration has long been embedded in Kampar's cultural practices, leading to a generally positive acceptance of the migrant-husband phenomenon. Financial support in the form of remittances emerges as the primary factor sustaining family resilience, complemented by emotional support delivered mainly through communication. Social support, religiosity, and the contributions of children also play significant roles in strengthening family resilience. Conversely, challenges such as delayed remittances, infrequent communication, and moral issues including second marriages undertaken while living away pose serious threats to family stability. This article contributes academically to the development of family integrity theory and offers practical insights for policymakers and communities in formulating strategies for family empowerment.

**Keywords:** Migrant husband, financial support, remittance, family resilience

**Abstrak:** Artikel ini mengkaji kompleksitas kehidupan keluarga pada perempuan yang suaminya bermigrasi untuk bekerja di Kabupaten Kampar, Provinsi Riau, dengan fokus pada bagaimana kewajiban nafkah dipenuhi serta bagaimana kondisi tersebut memengaruhi ketahanan keluarga dalam dimensi ekonomi, sosial, dan psikologis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap sepuluh informan yang terdiri atas istri, anak, dan tokoh masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi merantau telah lama mengakar dalam praktik budaya masyarakat Kampar, sehingga fenomena suami perantau pada umumnya diterima secara positif. Pemenuhan nafkah dalam bentuk remitansi menjadi faktor utama yang menopang ketahanan keluarga, yang dilengkapi dengan dukungan emosional terutama melalui komunikasi jarak jauh. Dukungan sosial, religiositas, serta kontribusi anak juga berperan penting dalam memperkuat ketahanan keluarga. Sebaliknya, berbagai tantangan seperti keterlambatan pengiriman nafkah, intensitas komunikasi yang rendah, serta persoalan moral, termasuk praktik pernikahan kedua selama masa perantauan, menjadi ancaman serius terhadap stabilitas keluarga. Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi akademik terhadap pengembangan teori ketahanan keluarga serta menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi pembuat kebijakan dan masyarakat dalam merumuskan strategi pemberdayaan keluarga.

**Kata Kunci:** Suami perantau, nafkah, remitansi, ketahanan keluarga

## Introduction

Every individual entering marriage hopes to build a happy and harmonious family, living side by side with their spouse through both joy and hardship.<sup>1</sup> A harmonious family is characterized by tranquility, affection, offspring, and generational continuity, compassion and sacrifice, mutual complementarity, and cooperation. Achieving such harmony requires that both husband and wife fulfill their respective rights and obligations. Indonesian Marriage Law. Law No. 1 of 1974, amended by Law No. 16 of 2019—Article 34 paragraph (1) states that “The husband is obliged to protect his wife and provide all necessities of household life according to his ability.” Paragraph (3) emphasizes that both husband and wife must help and complement each other to achieve family welfare. This indicates that financial support (nafkah) is both a legal and moral obligation inherent to a husband.<sup>2</sup>

In Islamic law, a husband is required to provide material and emotional support to his wife and children. The provision of nafkah is not limited to basic needs such as clothing, food, and shelter, but also includes education, health, and

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<sup>1</sup>Mursyid Djawas et al., “The Integration Between Syara’ and Ade’ in Marriage Tradition Bugis Bone, South Sulawesi,” *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2023).

<sup>2</sup>Yulmitra Handayani, “Tipologi Pelaksanaan Kewajiban Nafkah Lahir Suami Yang Berstatus Narapidana Perspektif Hukum Islam (Studi Analisis Interpretasi Teori Qira’ah Mubadalah),” *JURIS (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)* 19, no. 1 (2020), p. 13–30.

the overall well-being of the family.<sup>3</sup> This obligation is grounded in the Qur'an, Surah al-Baqarah, verse 233: "And the father must provide for the mothers' sustenance and clothing in a fair manner." This verse is understood as the legal basis for a husband's full responsibility to support his family according to his reasonable capacity. The Prophet Muhammad also emphasized this moral duty: "It is sufficient for a person to be considered sinful if he neglects those under his care" (HR. Abu Dawud). Thus, in Islam, nafkah encompasses material support, emotional support, and fulfillment of the wife's and children's essential needs (Surah al-Baqarah: 233; Surah Thalaq: 7).

In reality, however, fulfilling economic needs as part of family support is often challenging. Limited job opportunities, low wages, and rising living costs compel many husbands to migrate. Economic migration theory explains that migration occurs when individuals perceive better economic opportunities in the destination area compared to their place of origin.<sup>4</sup> Migration is therefore often understood as a household strategy to improve income and welfare.

The phenomenon of husbands migrating for work has long been part of Indonesian social dynamics, especially in rural communities. Remittances sent home frequently serve as the main economic pillar for families, enabling home improvements, supporting children's education, and enhancing social status. However, the functions of the family include economic support, emotional or affective support, child socialization, and social regulation and reproduction—functions that build structural and societal stability. Prolonged physical absence of a husband may weaken these affective and emotional functions.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, wives left behind often face dual roles as household managers and primary decision-makers, which may result in psychological stress. Children may also experience reduced paternal involvement, affecting their emotional development. The Regulation of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2013 states that family well-being is determined not only by economic factors but also by family unity, communication, and harmony.

The complexities described above are experienced by families in Kampar Regency, Riau. The community, which is predominantly (100%) muslim, holds the belief that the husband, as the head of the household, carries the primary responsibility of providing for the family (Surah an-Nisa: 34), while the wife supports the husband by managing domestic affairs. A responsible husband will strive tirelessly to provide for his family, even if it means living apart from them.

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<sup>3</sup>Asrizal Saiin et al., "The Property Rights Regulation, Semenda Marriage, and Exploring the Determinants in ASEAN Countries," *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 3, no. 2 (May 2023), p. 134–59.

<sup>4</sup>Michael P Todaro, *Economic Development* (New York: Boston: Pearson, 2021).

<sup>5</sup>Linda McKie and Samantha Callan, *Understanding Families: A Global Introduction* (SAGE Publisher, 2012).

Migration decisions are influenced by push factors such as limited job opportunities, low wages, and high living costs in the origin region, and pull factors such as better employment prospects and higher income at the destination.<sup>6</sup> Todaro and Smith likewise argue that migration is driven by expected income differentials between the origin and destination areas. Migration thus becomes a strategy for households seeking to maximize their economic resources.<sup>7</sup>

In long-distance marital relationships (LDR), family vulnerability often arises from limited face-to-face interaction, irregular communication, and misunderstandings. Wives may experience loneliness, anxiety about their husbands' safety, or concerns over infidelity. They must also shoulder dual responsibilities acting as both mother and father, and managing household finances for all family needs.<sup>8</sup>

Studies on long-distance marriages have been conducted by Saidah and Fahmi,<sup>9</sup> who examined family management in long-distance marriages in Kendal Regency. Similar studies were carried out by Melati Sumari et al., Acedera, and Yeoh, from communication and sociology perspectives.<sup>10</sup> and by Handayani in psychology.<sup>11</sup> Hoko Horii<sup>12</sup> studied wives working as migrant domestic workers (TKW) from the perspective of Islamic family law. However, few studies have specifically examined the fulfilment of nafkah by migrant husbands working abroad and its impact on family resilience.

This article explores the complex challenges faced by families with migrant husbands in Kampar, Riau Province, focusing on how these husbands

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<sup>6</sup>Umar Mukhtar et al., "Does Rural – Urban Migration Improve Employment Quality and Household Welfare? Evidence from Pakistan," *Sustainability* 10, no. 11 (2018), p. 4281; Mariusz Urbański, "Comparing Push and Pull Factors Affecting Migration," *Economies* 10, no. 21 (2022).

<sup>7</sup>M. P Todaro and S. C Smith, *Economic Development (12th Ed.)* (Boston: Boston: Pearson, 2015).

<sup>8</sup>Filda Rahma Saidah and Muhammad Zaki Fahmi, "Management Of Long-Distance Marriage For Overseas Female Worker Profession On Family Resilience In Kendal Regency," *El-Mashlahah* 13, no. 1 (2023), p. 93–106.

<sup>9</sup>Saidah and Fahmi, "Management of Long-Distance Marriage for Overseas Female Worker Profession on Family Resilience in Kendal Regency."

<sup>10</sup>Melati Sumari, N Abdullah, and N Yusof, "The Role of Religion in Long Distance Marriage as Experienced by Malaysian Muslim Husbands," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 52, no. 4 (2021), p. 403–20; Kristel Anne Acedera and Brenda S A Yeoh, "Mobilities, Communication, and Asia| Facebook, Long-Distance Marriages, and the Mediation of Intimacies," *International Journal of Communication* 12, no. 2018 (2018), p. 4123–42.

<sup>11</sup>Yulastry Handayani, "Komitmen, Conflict Resolution, Dan Kepuasan Perkawinan Pada Istri Yang Menjalani Hubungan Pernikahan Jarak Jauh," *Psikoborneo: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi* 4, no. 3 (2016), p. 325–33.

<sup>12</sup>Hoko Horii and Theresia Dyah Wirastri, "Living in a Legal Limbo: Mechanisms to 'Fix' The Legal and Social Positions of Unregistered Children in Indonesia," *The Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 2, no. 1 (October 2022); Nella Agustin et al., "The Impact of Delayed Marriage Due to Education and Career on Female Lecturers in Banda Aceh," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 8, no. 2 (2025), p. 1138–59.

fulfill their financial and emotional obligations, and how such arrangements affect family resilience from economic, social, and psychological perspectives. This study aims to contribute academically by strengthening theoretical discussions on marital obligations and family roles within migration contexts, and to offer practical insights for government and communities in designing family empowerment policies.

### **Nafkah and the Husband's Obligations in Legal and Social Perspectives**

Within the household, the husband holds the primary responsibility as the provider. This obligation is rooted in both religious norms and positive law. The Qur'an (QS 65:6) instructs husbands to provide for their families according to their means. Likewise, Surah Al-Baqarah:233 emphasizes that a father must provide sustenance and clothing for the mother who breastfeeds his child. Surah An-Nisa' verse 34 states that men are protectors and maintainers of women, as they are obliged to support them financially (Q.S. 4:34). These verses indicate that *nafkah* encompasses both material and non-material support.

In Indonesian positive law, Article 34 of Law No. 1 of 1974 stipulates that a husband must protect his wife and provide for household needs. This is reinforced in the Islamic Law Compilation (Kompilasi Hukum Islam), Article 80(4), which provides a legal basis that neglect of *nafkah* may constitute grounds for divorce.<sup>13</sup> According to Parsons (1951), within the family structure, the husband functions as the instrumental leader (economic provider), while the wife serves as the expressive leader (caregiver and household manager).<sup>14</sup> Although this division has become more flexible in contemporary contexts, it remains normative in many Indonesian communities.<sup>15</sup>

Migration is not merely an individual decision but rather a collective household strategy to reduce economic risk.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, a husband's decision to migrate for work is typically accompanied by the expectation to remit income to support the family's daily needs, including children's educational expenses. From the perspective of Household Economic Strategy, the household is viewed as an economic unit that seeks stability through role distribution: the husband engages

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<sup>13</sup>Kementerian Agama RI, *Kompilasi Hukum Islam di Indonesia* (Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam Direktorat Bina KUA dan Keluarga Sakinah, 2018).

<sup>14</sup>T Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1951); Oluwagbemiga Ezekiel Adeyemi, "Diverse Family Forms and Quality-of-Life in Sub-Saharan African Countries," *Development Southern Africa* 34, no. 6 (2017), p. 682–693; Talcott Parsons and Robert F Bales, *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process* (New York: New York: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>15</sup>K Tyas Tiffany, D. D Sartika, and E Lidya, "The Analysis of Gender Roles Division in Dual Career Families," *Journal of Gender Studies* 7, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>16</sup>Christian Dustmann et al., "Risk Attitudes and Household Migration Decisions," *Journal of Human Resources* 58, no. 1 (2023), p. 112–45; Nguyễn Xuân Anh, "International Migration - a Household Survival Strategy in Coastal Communities in Ha Tinh Province," *VNUHCM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 6, no. 1 (2022), p. 1497–1506.

in work outside the home, the wife manages domestic affairs, and children become the focus of educational investment.<sup>17</sup>

### Family Resilience

Family resilience refers to a family's capacity to withstand adversity and continue functioning effectively. The Family Stress Model explains that resilience is influenced by the interaction among stressors, resources, and coping strategies.<sup>18</sup> In this context, the husband's migration serves as a stressor, while remittances serve as a vital resource that helps maintain family welfare.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, the Family Resilience Framework highlights three major dimensions of family resilience:<sup>20</sup>

1. Belief systems: optimism, religiosity, and positive meaning-making in the face of challenges;
2. Organizational patterns: flexibility, social support, and family cohesion;
3. Communication processes: openness, clarity, and emotional connectedness.

Recent studies show that families with strong communication patterns and adaptive coping strategies often exhibit higher resilience even when the husband works far from home.<sup>21</sup>

The husband's obligation to provide *nafkah* serves as a normative and moral foundation, while migration functions as an economic strategy. Through remittances, migrant husbands can fulfill their financial obligations despite their physical absence. The fulfillment of *nafkah* subsequently contributes to family resilience, particularly in the domains of economic stability, psychosocial well-being, and children's education. Thus, although migration presents emotional

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<sup>17</sup>Rebecca Sear, "The Male Breadwinner Nuclear Family Is Not the 'traditional' Human Family, and Promotion of This Myth May Have Adverse Health Consequences," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 376, no. 1827 (2021).

<sup>18</sup>Reuben Hill et al., "Families Under Stress: Adjustment to the Crises of War Separation and Reunion," *New York: Harper & Row.*, 1949; Hamilton I. McCubbin and Joan M. Patterson, "The Family Stress Process: The Double ABCX Model of Adjustment and Adaptation," *Marriage & Family Review* 6, no. 1–2 (1983), p. 7–37.

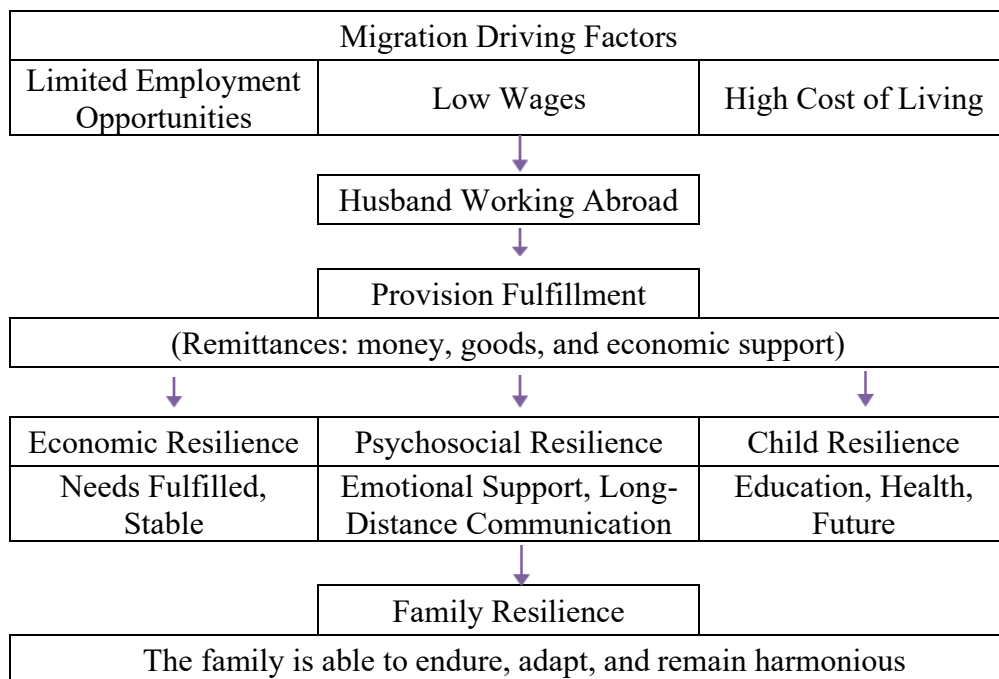
<sup>19</sup>Yuying Tong, Feinian Chen, and Binbin Shu, "Spousal Migration and Married Adults' Psychological Distress in Rural China: The Roles of Intimacy, Autonomy and Responsibility," *Social Science Research* 83, no. 102312 (2019); Zohid Askarov and Chris Doucouliagos, "A Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Remittances on Household Education Expenditure," *World Development* 129 (2020), p. 104860.

<sup>20</sup>Froma Walsh, "Family Resilience: A Framework for Clinical Practice," *Family Process*, 2003.

<sup>21</sup>Ar Rohman T Hidayat, Kenichiro Onitsuka, and Corinthias P M Sianipar, "Distance-Dependent Migration Intention of Villagers: Comparative Study of Peri-Urban and Remote Villages in Indonesia," *Administrative Sciences* 12, no. 2 (2022), p. 48; Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience (3rd Ed.)* (New York: New York: Guilford Press, 2016).

challenges, families may continue to function and adapt as long as basic needs are met and emotional communication is maintained.

A theoretical framework based on the literature above can be illustrated as follows:



This study was conducted in Kampar Regency, comprising 21 districts, 8 urban villages, and 243 rural villages. However, the research focused specifically on two urban villages Pasir Sialang and Tanjung where the number of migrant husbands is highest, amounting to approximately 50 families. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 10 families for participation. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with women whose husbands had migrated and with their children.

The research informants were divided into two groups: key informants and additional informants. The key informants were women whose husbands were migrant workers, along with their children. Additional informants included village heads and several local community leaders.

This study employed a qualitative approach to understand the subjective meanings constructed by the research participants. Accordingly, the researcher engaged in intensive interaction with the participants and sought to understand and develop analytical categories, patterns, and interpretations of the social processes occurring within the community under study.

### Tradition of Husbands Migrating from the Perspective of the Community

The general characteristics of families with migrant husbands indicate that marriages last 5 to 45 years, while the migrants themselves are typically 30 to 65 years old. Their migration destinations include several regions in Malaysia, such as Seremban, Malacca, Selangor, and Kuala Lumpur. Some husbands migrated while still unmarried, whereas others left after marriage. Their return visits are irregular most commonly once a year during Eid al-Fitr, though some return only for significant family events such as weddings or funerals.<sup>22</sup>

**Table 1. Profile of Migrant Husbands' Families**

Informant (Mother and Child)	Informant Age (Year)	Duration of migration (Year)	Job of Migration	Place of Migration	Number of Children
Ardi	35	20	Swiftlet farming company	Sabah	5
Dastia	62	46	Selling Food	Seremban	10
Emel	26	25	Electronic repair	Selangor	4
As	30	35	Rubber plantation	Johor	4
Rahm	25	20	Selling Food	Selangor	3
Mur	52	10	Heavy equipment operator	Johor	3
Nur	34	5	Construction worker	Johor	1
Irul	28	3	Selling Rice	Malaka	2
His	32	10	Rubber Plantation	Johor	3
Sit	26	30	Selling Rice	Kuala Lumpur	4

Families with migrant husbands have long been part of Kampar's cultural tradition. According to Shida Irwana Omar et al., the tradition of migration among Malay communities has existed for centuries, particularly among the proto-Malay groups who had relocated and occupied the Malay Peninsula and Borneo since around 1500 years ago.<sup>23</sup> Sabaruddin, a neighborhood head, stated that this

<sup>22</sup>Interview with Sabaruddin, Head of Neighborhood Association (RW) of Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>23</sup>Sandra Oliveira et al., "Ancient Genomes from the Last Three Millennia Support Multiple Human Dispersals into Wallacea," *Nat Ecol Evol* 6, no. 7 (2022), p. 1024–1034; Nurul Aina Ibrahim and Siti Nuranis Muhammad Apandi, "Tradisi Merantau Masyarakat Melayu

tradition has been practiced by the people of Kampar for generations. Some men migrate for only three years, whereas others have been away for up to twenty years. Although no official data exist regarding their number, almost every neighborhood has families with migrant husbands due to economic hardship in the village.<sup>24</sup> As soon as boys finish elementary or junior high school, many choose to migrate to Malaysia instead of continuing their education.<sup>25</sup>

Since migration is regarded as a common tradition, the presence of women whose husbands migrate is not viewed negatively. Instead, they live harmoniously within the community and support one another. Community leaders in Pasir Sialang revealed that many migrants are financially successful, having built houses, purchased cars and motorcycles, or even acquired land for rubber or oil palm cultivation, enabling them to send their children to universities.<sup>26</sup>

Positive public perceptions of migrants are inseparable from the community's evolving knowledge and worldview. The arrival of Islam in the Malay world introduced rational and intellectual values, including the concept of hijrah—a transformative journey that encourages individuals to improve their livelihood and mindset, including seeking sustenance.<sup>27</sup> Malay communities uphold a proverb, “jauh perjalanan, luas pemandangan” (the farther you travel, the broader your perspective), reinforcing a positive outlook on migration.

Such optimism strengthens the resilience of migrant families, particularly the wives. This resilience increases when the husband succeeds economically by purchasing productive land planted with oil palm or rubber. Such achievements foster pride and motivate others to migrate at a young age. As Nur explained, her husband migrated when he was young, inspired by relatives who had already settled in Malaysia.<sup>28</sup>

These positive perceptions significantly influence family resilience by fostering collective knowledge, which reduces the emotional burden on wives and their children. Empathy nurtures optimism that life can and should be improved both economically and socially.

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Menerusi Teks Terpilih Karya Hamka (The Nomadic Tradition of the Malays in Selected Hamka Texts),” *Jurnal Pengajian Melayu (JOMAS)* 32, no. 1 (2021), p. 89–104.

<sup>24</sup>Interview with Sabaruddin, Head of Neighborhood Association (RW) of Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with Sabaruddin, Head of Neighborhood Association (RW) of Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>26</sup>Interview with Asril, Head of Pasir Sialang Village, Pasir Sialang, Kampar, April 11, 2022.

<sup>27</sup>Fathurrosyid et al., “The Dissemination of Hijrah Doctrine on Social Media : A Study of Negotiation , Contestation , and Commodification of Religion,” *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 25, no. 2 (2024), p. 28–43.

<sup>28</sup>Interview with Nur, a Migrant in Johor, Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, May 26, 2022,

### Remittances Sent by Migrant Husbands as Material Support

Migration is primarily intended to improve the family's economic condition. From this economic intention emerge moral goals such as improving children's education, enhancing family capabilities, elevating social status, and increasing opportunities for religious obligations such as qurban and hajj.

As in any effort to change one's destiny, some migrants succeed while others do not fully achieve their goals. A migrant's primary measure of success is the remittances sent to their families. One interviewee shared that her family's economic condition improved significantly after her father migrated. The children were able to pursue higher education, and the mother occasionally visited Malaysia. The eldest child frequently traveled back and forth to assist the father and supervise younger siblings.<sup>29</sup> A family in Teratak Village explained that they had built several rental houses and operated a convenience store. The father's electronics repair work in Malaysia provided a stable income, supplemented by earnings from their plantation back home.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the family was able to meet both material and emotional needs. Rahma similarly stated that her father migrated when she was young, allowing her to complete her university education in Pekanbaru. He worked at a swiftlet company and sent monthly remittances, enabling the family to build a new and better life.<sup>31</sup>

However, the neighborhood head of RT 01 in Pasir Sialang estimated that only about 5% of migrants were able to purchase oil-palm plantations for their families.<sup>32</sup> Another community leader reported that some residents had migrated for 20–30 years and successfully bought plantations that sustain their families.<sup>33</sup>

These findings underscore that remittances, defined as money or goods transferred by migrants to their families through individual agents, banks, or postal services, play a crucial role in family welfare.<sup>34</sup> Remittances significantly influence wives' resilience. When remittances are stable, their ability to cope improves. One informant reported not receiving remittances because her husband

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<sup>29</sup>Interview with Ihs, a Migrant in Johor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 11, 2022.

<sup>30</sup>Interview with Ihs, a Migrant in Johor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 11, 2022.

<sup>31</sup>Interview with Rahm, a Migrant in Selangor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022

<sup>32</sup>Interview with Asril, Head of Pasir Sialang Village, Pasir Sialang, Kampar, April 11, 2022

<sup>33</sup>Interview with Sabaruddin, Head of Neighborhood Association (RW) of Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>34</sup> Nina Berman, "Who Is Sending Remittances? Understanding Global Networks of Support," *Migration & Diversity* 2, no. 3 (2023), p. 311–28; Boon-peng Hoh, Lian Deng, and Shuhua Xu, "The Peopling and Migration History of the Natives in Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo: A Glimpse on the Studies Over the Past 100 Years," *Frontiers in Genetics* 13, no. Article 767018 (2022), p. 1–14.

had not yet secured employment in Malaysia.<sup>35</sup> In other cases, the husband's salary was only sufficient for daily expenses abroad, leaving no funds to send home.<sup>36</sup> The situation becomes more difficult if the husband becomes ill and requires hospitalization, which incurs substantial costs and prevents him from returning home.<sup>37</sup>

Generally, migrant husbands send between 1 and 2 million rupiah per month, though the amount varies and depends on the husband's financial situation. Irregular remittances are caused by job loss, illness, aging, or diminished work capacity in semi-formal sectors, where competition with younger workers is intense. Wives whose husbands had previously purchased oil-palm plantations were able to support their families; others relied on backyard farming, tapping rubber, harvesting oil palm on others' land, working in restaurants, selling small goods, or doing odd jobs.

One informant, As, received 2,000,000 rupiah monthly. With this amount, she had to carefully manage household expenses, her children's education, and medical costs for a child with leukemia who required frequent hospital visits in Pekanbaru.<sup>38</sup>

Although economic hardship threatens family resilience, effective financial management and the use of additional income sources can help alleviate difficulties. Good decision-making in financial management, alongside family economic status, contributes to family well-being.<sup>39</sup> This was evident in the case of an informant who moved to Malaysia to join her husband in running a business, which significantly improved their financial condition.<sup>40</sup>

Material support (nafkah lahir) as a determinant of resilience varies between individuals. Acceptance of one's situation, the ability to manage resources, and a positive outlook on the future all shape women's resilience. One wife recalled her husband's advice to manage expenses wisely so that remittances would suffice—an encouragement that strengthened her persistence. Another informant, a neighborhood leader, observed a woman who never complained and

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<sup>35</sup> Interview with Dastia, a Migrant in Seremban, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022

<sup>36</sup> Interview with As, a migrant in Johor, originally from Kampa Village, Kampar, April 13, 2022

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Dastia, a Migrant in Seremban, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022

<sup>38</sup> Interview with As, a migrant in Johor, originally from Kampa Village, Kampar, April 13, 2022

<sup>39</sup> Nersa Nersa, Goso Goso, and Duriani Duriani, "The Influence of Financial Literacy on Family Financial Planning and Management Among Housewives," *Al-Kharaj: Journal of Islamic Economic and Business* 7, no. 2 (2025), p. 604–24.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Emel, a Migrant in Selangor, Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022

expressed contentment despite having only a small vegetable garden.<sup>41</sup> Support from community leaders, including assistance from government programs, also helped strengthen family resilience.

A positive perspective influences emotional responses such as affection, humor, optimism, constructive problem solving, and mutual encouragement, all of which enhance family resilience.<sup>42</sup> Even small acts of assistance may have a meaningful impact if received positively. Everall notes that such internal strengths cognitive capacity, self-concept, and self-esteem—are essential individual factors shaping resilience.<sup>43</sup> Thus, when wives maintain a positive self-view, think constructively, and uphold their dignity, they are better able to endure hardship, even when remittances are insufficient.

### **Patterns and Frequency of Communication as Fulfillment of Emotional Support (*Nafkah Batin*)**

Families with migrant husbands inevitably experience changes in their communication patterns. Such changes occur due to long-distance marriages, where geographical separation between spouses arises from prior commitments, typically related to career or employment demands. Communication is essential in maintaining marital commitment, family harmony, and the fulfillment of emotional needs. Family harmony is built upon mutual respect, acceptance, appreciation, affection, and trust between husband and wife.<sup>44</sup> Sustained communication patterns strengthen family resilience. Harmonious communication serves as the foundation through which families create shared meaning, develop coping strategies, and maintain relational balance<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Interview with Asril, Head of Pasir Sialang Village, Pasir Sialang, Kampar, April 11, 2022

<sup>42</sup>Luke A Egan et al., “Resilience to Stress and Adversity: A Narrative Review of the Role of Positive Affect Resilience to Stress and Adversity: A Narrative Review of the Role of Positive Affect,” *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 117 (2024), p. 2011–2038.; Melina Von Kraemer, Åse Fagerlund, and Katarina Pettersson, “Strengthening Parents’ and Children’s Wellbeing Through Positive Psychology: A Qualitative Study of Parents’ Experiences of a Structured Training in Mindfulness and Character Strength,” *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology* 9, no. 2 (2024), p. 511–32; Malek Smida et al., “Coping Strategies, Optimism, and Resilience Factors Associated with Mental Health Outcomes among Medical Residents Exposed to Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Qatar,” *Brain and Behavior* 11, no. 8 (2021), p. 1–9.

<sup>43</sup>Indah Permata Sari, Ifdil, and Frischa Meivilona Yendi, “Resiliensi Pada Single Mother Setelah Kematian Pasangan Hidup,” *SCHOULID: Indonesian Journal of School Counseling* 4, no. 3 (2019), p. 76–82.

<sup>44</sup>Reynalda Fildzah Dessyrianti and Jenny Lukito Setiawan, “Trust and Communication as Predictors of Marital Intimacy Among Individuals in Dual-Earner Marriages,” *Humanitas: Indonesian Psychological Journal* 20, no. 1 (2023), p. 1–10.

<sup>45</sup>Ekmel Geçer and Yildirim Murat, “Family Communication and Psychological Distress in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemic: Mediating Role of Coping,” *Sage* 44, no. 1 (2023), p. 203–19.

Communication practices among families with migrant husbands vary considerably. Some communicate via video calls almost daily, sharing updates about daily activities, consulting one another on decisions that need mutual agreement, and expressing emotional closeness.<sup>46</sup> Another informant stated that her husband frequently called to discuss family matters and the development of their six children. The father asked each child about school and daily activities, allowing them to feel emotionally close and supervised despite the physical distance.<sup>47</sup> Such communication greatly motivates children to study. Rapid developments in communication technology significantly facilitate these interactions, contributing to family resilience.

Conversely, the inability to maintain adequate communication in long-distance marriages greatly affects family resilience. When coupled with irregular remittances, wives may feel abandoned by their husbands, as did As.<sup>48</sup> Wives may also experience anxiety and suspicion regarding their husbands' fidelity, given the perceived temptations in urban areas such as Johor and Kuala Lumpur.<sup>49</sup> These conditions can lead to marital conflict and, in some cases, divorce. Mur recounted feeling neglected when communication declined, and remittances became irregular. She later discovered that her husband had remarried while he was abroad. When he eventually returned with his new wife, conflict erupted and resulted in her request for divorce.<sup>50</sup>

An ideal communication pattern encompasses not only phone calls but also regular remittances and periodic home visits. Mur described how her husband could not be present during the birth of their child and communicated only via mobile phone.<sup>51</sup> Fortunately, she received support from close relatives who assisted her during childbirth, which strengthened her emotionally. In another case, Ardi explained that his father could not attend his wedding and could participate only via video call due to the COVID-19 pandemic and financial constraints.<sup>52</sup> Such experiences leave lasting psychological impacts and can generate emotional distance within the family. In these situations, the resilience of wives giving birth without their husbands or children whose fathers cannot attend significant life events is disrupted due to feelings of sadness and disappointment. According to Walsh, three aspects of family communication

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<sup>46</sup>Interview with As, a migrant in Johor, originally from Kampa Village, Kampar, April 13, 2022.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with Mur, a Migrant in Johor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022

<sup>48</sup>Interview with As, a migrant in Johor, originally from Kampa Village, Kampar, April 13, 2022.

<sup>49</sup>Interview with Sit, a Migrant in Kuala Lumpur, Kampa Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>50</sup>Interview with Mur, a Migrant in Johor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022.

<sup>51</sup>Interview with Emel, a Migrant in Selangor, Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022.

<sup>52</sup>Interview with Ardi, a Migrant in Sabah, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 11, 2022

must be emphasized: clarity, open emotional expression, and collaborative problem solving.<sup>53</sup>

### Social and Religious Support for Families of Migrant Husbands

For families with migrant husbands, spousal support is crucial in reducing stress. In its absence, strong support from extended family networks becomes indispensable.<sup>54</sup> A wide support system including relatives and community members provides reciprocal assistance and information exchange and contributes to overall well-being.<sup>55</sup>

One informant reported living with her mother while both her husband and father were working abroad. As a young couple, she did not feel lonely because she interacted daily with her siblings, sharing house chores and emotional companionship. Another informant who lived only with her children stated that neighbors frequently visited, strengthening social bonds through casual gatherings and occasional food sharing.<sup>56</sup> For women whose remittances were delayed, neighbors often extended loans or allowed credit at local shops until the remittance arrived.<sup>57</sup> Some wives also received support from local leaders, such as RT and RW heads, who informed them about government assistance programs, including BLT, PKH, and health card services.<sup>58</sup>

Social support can be valued into emotional, esteem, instrumental, and informational support.<sup>59</sup> When wives in long-distance marriages receive such support, their vulnerability decreases significantly. Social support offers psychological and physical comfort by fostering a sense of being cared for,

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<sup>53</sup>Janet T Y Leung, Daniel T L Shek, and C.-M Tang, "Development and Validation of the Chinese Family Resilience Scale in Families in Hong Kong," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 20, no. 1929 (2023), p. 1–19; Walsh, "Family Resilience: A Framework for Clinical Practice."

<sup>54</sup>Rabiye Akın Işık and Yunus Kaya, "The Relationships among Perceived Stress, Conflict Resolution Styles, Spousal Support and Marital Satisfaction during the COVID-19 Quarantine," *Current Psychology* 41, no. 6 (2022), p. 3328–38.

<sup>55</sup>P Dudgeon et al., "Connection between Family, Kinship and Social and Emotional Wellbeing," *Canberra: Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW)*, 2021.

<sup>56</sup>Interview with Rahm, a Migrant in Selangor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022.

<sup>57</sup>Interview with As, a migrant in Johor, originally from Kampa Village, Kampar, April 13, 2022.

<sup>58</sup>Interview with Sit, a Migrant in Kuala Lumpur, Kampa Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>59</sup>Yinying Zhang, Yiwen Hu, and Min Yang, "The Relationship between Family Communication and Family Resilience in Chinese Parents of Depressed Adolescents: A Serial Multiple Mediation of Social Support and Psychological Resilience," *BMC Psychology* 12, no. 33 (2024), p. 1–11.

valued, and included conditions that create safety and confidence for women as they fulfill household responsibilities.<sup>60</sup>

Religious commitment also plays a significant role in strengthening family resilience. Families tend to rely on spiritual values, especially during difficult periods. Religion becomes a source of hope, emotional stability, and inner strength.<sup>61</sup> One informant described her emotional struggle when learning that her husband was hospitalized in Malaysia while her savings were depleted; unable to visit him, she coped by praying, surrendering to God, and seeking spiritual strength to persevere.<sup>62</sup> Another informant, whose husband remarried abroad and later sought divorce, relied heavily on faith and family support. Her oil palm plantation, purchased with savings and assistance from relatives, ensured her survival.<sup>63</sup> She also received zakat from the local mosque due to her active participation in religious activities. Such involvement not only fosters spiritual resilience but also strengthens social ties and emotional well-being.

### Children as Contributors to Family Resilience

Children play a significant role in enhancing the resilience of women whose husbands migrate. One informant persevered despite the absence of remittances because her ten children were obedient, affectionate, and supportive.<sup>64</sup> Mothers who raise their children alone often receive strong emotional responses from their children, reinforcing their resilience. “We love our mother very much because she has guided, cared for, and raised us patiently. She always tries to hide her sadness and remains strong in front of us.”<sup>65</sup>

Children require not only material support but also emotional nurturing, guidance, and affection. One mother recounted the pain of discovering that her husband had remarried abroad. Her children expressed deep resentment and refused to communicate further with their father.<sup>66</sup> Such disappointment can

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<sup>60</sup>Dudgeon et al., “Connection between Family, Kinship and Social and Emotional Wellbeing.”

<sup>61</sup>Ali Syahidin Mubarak and Mirna Wahyu Agustina, “Religiosity as a Mediator of Social Support for the Employee Engagement of Female Lecturers in Long-Distance Marriages,” *Indigenous: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi* 9, no. 3 (2024), p. 234–44; Sumari, Abdullah, and Yusof, “The Role of Religion in Long Distance Marriage as Experienced by Malaysian Muslim Husbands.”

<sup>62</sup>Interview with Dastia, a Migrant in Seremban, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022.

<sup>63</sup>Interview with Mur, a Migrant in Johor, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022.

<sup>64</sup>Interview with Dastia, a Migrant in Seremban, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022.

<sup>65</sup>Interview with Irul, a Migrant in Malacca, Pasir Sialang Village, Kampar, April 12, 2022.

<sup>66</sup>Interview with Emel, a Migrant in Selangor, Bukit Payung Village, Kampar, April 14, 2022.

create psychological strain and, in extreme cases, may lead to neglect or abandonment of children.<sup>67</sup>

Conversely, well-behaved and supportive children strengthen their mother's emotional resilience. Their positive behavior instills pride and helps mothers mask disappointment while accepting their circumstances.<sup>68</sup> According to Windle, such positive influences act as protective factors, enhancing well-being and buffering individuals from risk factors.<sup>69</sup>

### Resilience Factors in Families with Migrant Husbands

Based on the informants' experiences, the primary factors influencing resilience among families with migrant husbands in Kampar are limited material and emotional support. In addition, a unique characteristic of the local context is the cultural perception that migration is normal and even desirable. This perception arises because Malaysia is geographically and culturally close to Riau. Many earlier migrants have already obtained Malaysian citizenship or long-term residency and are regarded as “successful.” Such success stories create hope and confidence that migrating is a viable means of improving one’s socioeconomic condition. Moreover, the presence of established Kampar migrant communities in Malaysia provides new migrants with a sense of security.

Some women, however, do not prefer their husbands to migrate, believing that families function best when intact, with both material and emotional needs fulfilled. Nevertheless, they often concede when their husbands express a strong desire to migrate for economic improvement. In such cases, vulnerability may surface easily, especially when triggering factors such as financial instability or poor communication arise.

The factors influencing resilience among wives of migrant husbands can be diagrammatically illustrated as follows:

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<sup>67</sup>Fatma Ozge Ünsal and Ibrahim Hakki Acar, “Pathways to Children’s Behavioral Problems during the Parenting Approaches,” *Children* 10, no. 4 (2023), p. 639; Shawna J Lee et al., “Parental Social Isolation and Child Maltreatment Risk during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Journal of Family Violence* 37 (2022), p. 813–24.

<sup>68</sup>Interview with Sit, a Migrant in Kuala Lumpur, Kampa Village, Kampar, May 24, 2022.

<sup>69</sup>C. J Dunst, “Family Hardiness and Parent and Family Functioning in Households with Children Experiencing Adverse Life Conditions: A Meta Analysis,” *International Journal of Psychological Research* 14, no. 2 (2021), p. 93–118.

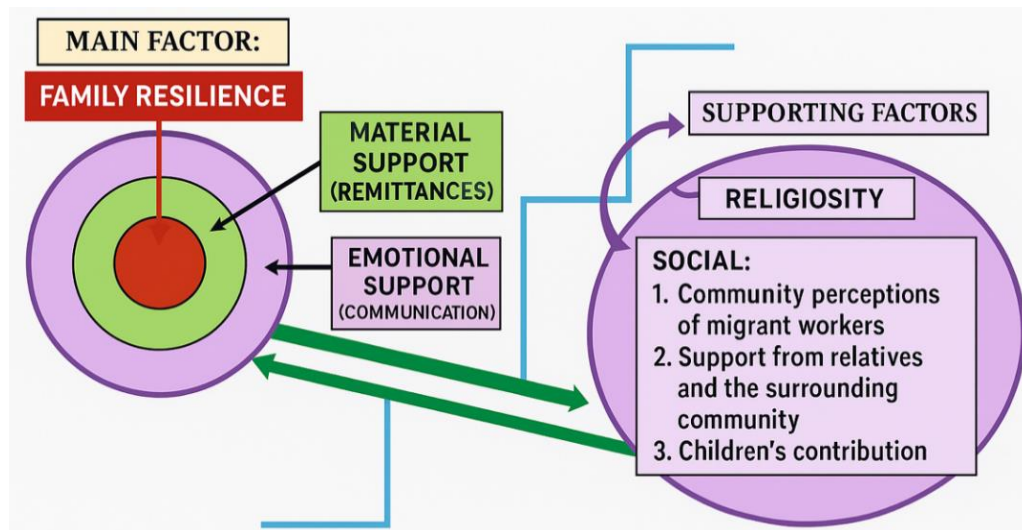


Figure 1. Factors Influencing Resilience among Wives of Migrant Husbands

The diagram above illustrates that family resilience among households with migrant husbands in Kampar is predominantly determined by the provision of material and emotional support specifically remittances as material sustenance and communication patterns as emotional sustenance.

These factors are directly tied to the family's basic needs and occur routinely. When both operate effectively and consistently, wives' resilience remains stable, forming the core of the family's overall resilience. Conversely, disruptions in either factor decrease wives' resilience, thereby weakening the family's overall stability. This relationship is understandable because economic needs food, clothing, and housing constitute primary necessities in life.

Field data indicate that although economic hardship poses a significant threat to family resilience, effective management of existing financial resources can help mitigate difficulties.<sup>70</sup> emphasize that sound financial decision-making, combined with the family's economic status, contributes meaningfully to family well-being.

Similarly, communication patterns both in intensity and quality serve as essential components of emotional sustenance within marital relationships. When communication is maintained optimally, family stability is preserved. As experts assert, harmonious communication is fundamental to how families create

<sup>70</sup>Afniatun (2023). Nur Afniatun, Sanurdi, and Siti Ahdina Saadatirrohmi, "The Influence of Financial Literacy and Income on Family Welfare in Rato Village, Bolo District, Bima Regency Through Financial Behavior as A Variable Intervening," *IQTISHADUNA* 14, no. 2 (2023), p. 105–18.

meaningful shared experiences, develop coping strategies, and maintain agreement and balance.

On the other hand, family environment, social environment, religious commitment, and local cultural context also influence family resilience. These factors may weaken family stability, yet they can also reinforce the primary determinants adequate remittances and sustained communication. As classifies social support into emotional, esteem, instrumental, and informational support.<sup>71</sup> When wives in long-distance marriages receive such support, their vulnerability decreases significantly.

Support within Kampar's kinship-based society, where extended families are guided and protected by *ninik mamak* (maternal uncles responsible for the well-being of nieces and nephews), is generally accessible. A broad family support system enables reciprocal interactions, information exchange, and collective contributions to others' well-being.<sup>72</sup> Psychologically, this social structure influences the resilience of families with migrant husbands, particularly because the Kampar Malay kinship system is matrilineal, with lineage traced through women.

## Conclusion

The obligation of husbands in Kampar Regency to provide for their families is fulfilled through various means, including migration. The long-standing tradition of migrating to Malaysia has become a motivating factor for young couples entering marriage; wives anticipate periods of separation, while husbands prepare to live far from their families to meet the household's material needs. However, migration as a means of securing material sustenance inevitably affects the provision of emotional support, thereby disrupting family stability. Family resilience is largely shaped by three principal factors: the wife's individual resilience, the material and emotional support provided by the husband particularly through remittances and communication and the communication patterns maintained between spouses. In addition to these core determinants, four supporting factors strengthen families with migrant husbands' resilience: the family environment, the social environment, the level of religious commitment, and the local cultural context.

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<sup>71</sup>Zhang, Hu, and Yang, "The Relationship between Family Communication and Family Resilience in Chinese Parents of Depressed Adolescents : A Serial Multiple Mediation of Social Support and Psychological Resilience."

<sup>72</sup>Megan Gilligan et al., "Family Networks and Psychological Well-Being in Midlife," 2017; Dunst, "Family Hardiness and Parent and Family Functioning in Households with Children Experiencing Adverse Life Conditions: A Meta Analysis."

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### **Interviews**

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