
Silent Treatment as a Form of Marital Conflict from the Perspective of Islamic Family Law (A Study in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency)

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Abstract: Silent treatment is a form of domestic conflict that is often perceived as normal, yet it has the potential to cause psychological violence and undermine family harmony. This study aims to analyze the practice of silent treatment within marriage and its legal standing from the perspective of Islamic family law, based on social realities in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency. The research employs a qualitative method using an empirical juridical approach combined with normative juridical analysis. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with three married couples with different lengths of marriage, supported by observation and documentation, and analyzed with reference to fiqh literature, the Qur'an, hadith, Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, and the Compilation of Islamic Law. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model. The findings of this study indicate that silent treatment constitutes a passive-aggressive communication pattern that leads to emotional distance, misunderstandings, neglect of marital obligations such as emotional and sexual support, and a decline in the quality of the husband–wife relationship. From the perspective of Islamic family law, this practice may be categorized as a form of *nusyuz* (individual disobedience) or *syiqaq* (prolonged marital conflict) when it is carried out repeatedly and over an extended period, as it contradicts the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* (Qur'an, Ar-Rum [30]:21). Its impacts include a decrease in trust and household stability, with resolution pursued through stages of counsel (*mau'izhah*), separation of beds (*hajr*), and mediation by *hakam* (Qur'an, An-Nisa [4]:35). This study emphasizes the importance of religious education and *ma'ruf* (ethical and respectful) communication in preventing similar conflicts, contributing both theoretically and practically to the prevention of psychological violence within marriage.

Keywords: silent treatment, psychological violence, Islamic family law, *nusyuz*, *syiqaq*.

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Introduction

Domestic violence remains a crucial issue in the social and legal landscape of Indonesia. Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence emphasizes that violence is not limited to physical acts but also includes psychological violence, sexual violence, and neglect. Nevertheless, empirical realities show that psychological violence often does not receive adequate attention, even though its impact on victims can be as serious as physical violence, particularly in terms of mental health and family harmony. One form of psychological violence that frequently occurs in households yet often goes unnoticed is silent treatment.

Silent treatment refers to behavior in which one partner deliberately ignores the other, refuses to interact, or ceases communication as a form of emotional punishment. According to Sri Ayu Irawati's research, such behavior has the potential to cause serious psychological effects on victims, including symptoms of depression, anxiety disorders, decreased self-confidence, and deterioration of social

relationships (Irawati, 2025). In the context of marital life, silent treatment should not merely be viewed as a communication problem, but rather as a form of psychological violence because it inflicts deep emotional suffering on the partner. Therefore, this practice carries significant legal and moral implications that warrant further examination.

In Islam, marriage is not merely a social contract but a *mītsāqan ghaliżan* (a strong covenant), as emphasized in Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 21. To realize balance and harmony in marital life, Islam establishes principles governing the rights and obligations of both spouses. The husband is obligated to provide maintenance, protection, and kind treatment to his wife. Conversely, the wife is obliged to obey her husband in matters that are *ma'rūf* (proper) and to safeguard her dignity and the family's honor. Nurwanti and Zaelani assert that Islam rejects all forms of domestic violence, as the primary objective of marriage is to establish a relationship grounded in *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, rather than one characterized by domination and suffering (Nurwanti & Zaelani, 2023). However, in real marital life, the implementation of these rights and obligations does not always proceed in balance. Such imbalance often gives rise to emotional conflicts, one of which manifests as silent treatment deliberately ignoring one's spouse as a form of protest, rejection, or avoidance of communication. This phenomenon not only creates emotional distance but also potentially violates the obligation of good interaction (*mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*) as regulated in Islamic family law.

The phenomenon of silent treatment in marriage presents a particular dilemma for couples trapped in this cycle. This behavior can be analyzed through the Islamic legal frameworks of *nusyuz* and *syiqaq*. In fiqh terminology, *nusyuz* is defined as disobedience or defiance by either spouse toward marital obligations. When a husband behaves indifferently, refuses interaction, or neglects his wife's emotional needs, such actions may be categorized as *nusyuz* by the husband. Conversely, when a wife deliberately chooses to ignore her husband with the intent to cause harm or evade marital obligations, this may be considered *nusyuz* by the wife (Nasrulloh & Ubaid Ermawan, 2024). Meanwhile, *syiqaq* in Islamic law refers to deep and prolonged conflict between spouses that may lead to marital breakdown. In cases of silent treatment, *syiqaq* may arise when prolonged silence generates sustained misunderstandings, worsens communication, and creates emotional distance that is difficult to repair (Khairuddin & Salam, 2021). Therefore, Islamic law provides conflict resolution mechanisms such as *tahkīm* (mediation) through the appointment of arbitrators (*hakam*) from both families to prevent disputes from escalating into divorce. From the perspectives of both Islamic law and Indonesian national law, the marital relationship must be built upon affection, mutual respect, and healthy communication. Article 77 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam/KHI) affirms that husbands and wives are obliged to love, respect, remain faithful to one another, and provide both material and emotional support. Therefore, any form of emotional neglect is contrary to the principles of marriage characterized by *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

Several previous studies have examined silent treatment from various perspectives. Sri Ayu Irawati emphasized that silent treatment in marriage has severe consequences for victims' mental health, including anxiety, depression, and diminished self-esteem, and can be classified as psychological violence (Irawati, 2025). From the standpoint of positive law, Faizatur Rahmawati et al. concluded that silent treatment fulfills the elements of psychological violence under Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, entitling victims to legal protection (Rahmawati et al., 2025). From the perspective of Islamic law, Farida Pratista et al. clearly distinguish between silent treatment and the concept of *al-hajr*. Their research emphasizes that *al-hajr* is a temporary, educational measure within the context of *nusyuz*, whereas silent treatment lacks a corrective purpose and is not justified in Islamic teachings (Pratista et al., 2025). Meanwhile, Safira Assegaf and Situ Asih view silent treatment as a form of passive-aggressive communication that damages interpersonal relationships and emotional well-being (Assegaf, 2025). Unlike these studies, the present research focuses on silent treatment as a form of marital conflict analyzed through a juridical-empirical

approach within the framework of Islamic family law, linking normative Islamic legal principles with social realities in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency.

From both Islamic law and Indonesian national law perspectives, marital relationships must be built upon affection, mutual respect, and healthy communication. Article 77 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) stipulates that husband and wife are obliged to love, respect, remain faithful to one another, and provide both material and emotional support. Thus, any form of emotional neglect contradicts the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* in marriage. Similarly, Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence broadens the definition of violence to include psychological violence, encompassing actions such as silent treatment that cause emotional suffering. Therefore, the practice of communication neglect in marriage not only violates Islamic values but also potentially constitutes a violation of positive law subject to legal sanctions.

The phenomenon of silent treatment is not merely conceptual but is also empirically observable in society. Preliminary observations in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency indicate that several married couples experience emotional conflicts expressed through prolonged mutual silence. This practice commonly emerges following disputes related to economic issues, employment, or daily domestic matters. Within the local community, such behavior is often perceived as normal or as a means of cooling down emotions. However, victims of silent treatment frequently experience emotional distress, feelings of being unappreciated, and a loss of security within the marital relationship. When repeated and prolonged, this condition has the potential to intensify conflicts and lead to marital breakdown.

Although studies on domestic violence have been widely conducted, most research focuses on physical and general psychological violence. Research specifically addressing silent treatment from the perspective of Islamic family law particularly using an empirical approach at the rural community level remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the practice of silent treatment as a form of marital conflict and to examine its legal standing within the framework of Islamic family law based on social realities in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design using an empirical juridical approach combined with normative juridical analysis. The qualitative method was chosen because the issue under examination cannot be adequately analyzed solely through written legal documents; rather, it requires an in-depth understanding of the social dynamics occurring within the community (Sugiyono, 2019), particularly regarding the practice of silent treatment in marital relationships. The empirical juridical approach is used to explore the relationship between Islamic family law norms derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as positive legal regulations such as the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) and Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, and the actual conditions found in the field, as reflected in the practice of silent treatment experienced by married couples. Meanwhile, normative juridical analysis is employed to examine Islamic legal concepts such as *mu 'āsyarah bil ma 'rūf*, *nusyuz*, *syiqaq*, *al-hajr*, and *tahkīm* in order to classify silent treatment as a form of marital conflict and psychological violence from the perspective of Islamic family law.

The nature of this research is descriptive-analytical. It is descriptive because the study seeks to portray the phenomenon of silent treatment in marital life as it occurs in reality, both from empirical findings and from the perspective of Islamic family law. It is analytical because the research analyzes this practice using Islamic legal theories and provisions of positive law to identify its implications for the rights and obligations of husbands and wives.

The research was conducted in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency. This location was selected due to the presence of silent treatment practices in

marital relationships within the local community, which have rarely been examined from the perspective of Islamic family law. The research involved six informants consisting of three married couples with varying lengths of marriage (25 years, 6 years, and 2 years). Informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique based on specific considerations and criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for informants included: (1) legally married couples; (2) couples who have experienced or are currently experiencing marital conflict in the form of silent treatment; (3) willingness to participate in interviews; and (4) varying lengths of marriage (long-term, medium-term, and newly married). The selection of these informants aimed to obtain authentic empirical data regarding the practice of silent treatment in marriage, as well as to understand its impact on spousal relationships and its relevance to the concepts of *nusyuz* and *syiqaq* in Islamic family law.

Primary data in this study were obtained directly through interviews and observations of married couples who experienced or practiced silent treatment in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency. The informants consisted of three married couples with different lengths of marriage, allowing the researcher to obtain diverse insights into the forms, impacts, and resolutions of silent treatment within marital relationships. Secondary data sources included various relevant scholarly literature, such as books on Islamic family law, Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, works on *fiqh munākahāt*, and academic journals discussing psychological violence, marital conflict, *nusyuz*, and *syiqaq*. Data collection techniques comprised in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation, which were employed to obtain empirical data and to support the normative analysis of the phenomenon under study.

Data analysis in this research employed a qualitative descriptive analysis model as proposed by Miles & Huberman (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and verification and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting, simplifying, and focusing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation in order to identify relevant patterns and themes. Subsequently, the reduced data were presented systematically to facilitate understanding and analysis. The final stage involved verification and conclusion drawing, in which conclusions were provisional and could be strengthened or revised based on further data findings (Moleong & Surjaman, 1989).

The data analysis method using a normative juridical approach was conducted through qualitative descriptive analysis. This approach aimed to describe and understand the phenomenon of silent treatment in marital relationships and its impacts on husband–wife relations. The normative juridical approach was employed to examine the phenomenon based on sources of Islamic law and Indonesian positive law, particularly Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence and the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI). Through this approach, silent treatment was analyzed as a form of psychological violence, and solutions grounded in the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* were formulated.

Through this method, the study not only describes silent treatment as a form of dysfunctional communication within marriage but also analyzes it from the perspective of Islamic family law to determine the extent to which such behavior may be categorized as psychological violence, while simultaneously offering solutions based on the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* to realize a harmonious family.

Results and Discussion

Forms and Impacts of Silent Treatment in Marital Relationships in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency

Domestic violence is a reality that demands serious attention from society at all levels. In Indonesian society, which is still strongly influenced by customary law, domestic issues tend to be concealed because they are considered a disgrace. As a result, many wives who experience

psychological violence within marriage succumb to pressure and suppress their suffering, which ultimately affects their mental health.

Silent treatment, or what in Indonesian is often referred to as *perlakuan mendiamkan*, is a form of non-verbal communication in which a person stops speaking or interacting with others as a form of punishment, manipulation, or self-defense mechanism. Psychologists describe silent treatment as a passive-aggressive communication style used when individuals feel uncertain about handling conflict. Historically, silent treatment was first implemented in 1835 as an alternative to physical punishment by prohibiting communication and covering prisoners' faces. This practice caused psychological effects such as feelings of being unappreciated, ignored, and mentally distressed, as one's existence seemed unacknowledged.

Silent treatment refers to an attitude in which a person deliberately refuses to speak or ignores communication as a form of punishment. Acts of silencing, neglecting, and treating a partner with hurtful silence can occur repeatedly. In interpersonal relationships, silent treatment can arise in various contexts, such as between spouses, parents and children, or among friends. However, within the scope of Indonesia's Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (UU PKDRT), the discussion focuses on silent treatment occurring within the household, particularly in husband–wife relationships. Ignoring one's partner is an inappropriate way to resolve problems, especially when practiced repeatedly and systematically within marital relations. Silent treatment creates feelings of anxiety, fear, and sadness that disrupt a sense of security. This condition can lead to unhappiness and psychological harm, potentially escalating conflict within the relationship. Reluctance to communicate also triggers feelings of alienation, decreased self-esteem, and a decline in relationship quality. In this context, silent treatment is not merely silence but has become a manipulative pattern that emotionally harms the victim and potentially damages mental well-being. Silent treatment constitutes an act of ignoring or failing to respond to communication as a form of protest, often used as a means of manipulation or control.

Based on interview findings, silent treatment in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency appears in several main forms:

- a. Deliberately ignoring one's partner after conflict. Silent treatment generally occurs after arguments, disputes, or misunderstandings, whether due to economic issues, a partner's attitude, specific demands, or minor dislikes. It takes the form of refusing to speak, not responding to communication, and maintaining emotional distance for several days.
- b. Avoiding communication to prevent further conflict. Some wives stated that silence was chosen to avoid bigger arguments or as a way to calm themselves. Silence was considered safer than speaking in an emotional state.
- c. As a form of protest or a means to encourage self-reflection. Some informants used silent treatment as a form of "subtle protest" toward their partners, hoping they would realize their mistakes and engage in self-reflection.
- d. Neglect of domestic interaction. Beyond not speaking, silent treatment was also evident in ignoring one's partner, failing to respond to emotional needs, and reducing daily interaction. In some cases, certain obligations such as emotional and sexual support and efforts to maintain harmony were also neglected.
- e. Occurring unilaterally or bilaterally. In some couples, only one party engaged in silent treatment, while in others it developed into mutual silence, transforming the conflict into a two-sided dispute (*syiqāq*) (Interview, 2025).

Interviews also revealed several negative impacts of silent treatment in Karang Endah Village:

- a. Decline in communication quality. Almost all informants stated that communication became severely reduced or disconnected, causing problems to remain unresolved and often recur.

- b. Weakening of trust between partners. Several wives reported emerging trust issues, fear of expressing feelings, and a sense of being ignored, making openness within marriage increasingly difficult.
- c. Increased conflict and misunderstanding. Silent treatment was often perceived as neglect or disregard, which exacerbated conflict and triggered new arguments once communication resumed.
- d. Disruption of marital harmony and stability. Informants noted that household activities became uncomfortable, relationships felt distant, and emotional atmospheres became tense. Over time, this condition affected household stability.
- e. Psychological impact on partners. Silent treatment caused feelings of disappointment, lack of appreciation, exclusion, and was even considered capable of damaging one party's mental health due to feeling unnoticed and unimportant.
- f. Potential to lead to *nusyuz* or *syiqāq*. Some informants viewed silent treatment as a form of disobedience (*nusyuz*) due to neglect of communication responsibilities and harmony, while others considered it capable of developing into *syiqāq* (mutual conflict) (Interview, 2025).

The phenomenon of silent treatment in the marital lives of the Karang Endah community emerges as a response to everyday disputes, such as economic demands, stubborn attitudes, and minor misunderstandings. Based on interview results, the forms of silent treatment varied among couples. In the first couple, married for 25 years, the wife ignored and avoided the husband for several days to prevent arguments. The husband responded with silence due to the wife's stubbornness, causing the conflict to develop into prolonged disputes.

In the second couple (six years of marriage), the wife (Mrs. Tya Puspita Dewi) used silent treatment to encourage the husband to reflect on himself, while still quietly fulfilling household obligations. The husband (Mr. Anggi) responded by ignoring his wife over minor issues she disliked, resulting in continued conflict until discussions ended in arguments. The third couple (two years of marriage) showed a similar pattern: the wife (Mrs. Aina Latifah) ignored her husband because she felt unheard, while the husband (Mr. Raffi) remained silent to avoid prolonging the problem, which initially stemmed from a misunderstanding.

Psychologically, silent treatment represents a form of emotional withdrawal that causes partners to feel ignored and damages emotional bonds. Its impact on households in Karang Endah Village includes reduced communication, prolonged tension, and declining trust. Interview findings indicate that silent treatment tends to escalate conflict, generate disappointment, and negatively affect marital unity.

Silent treatment contradicts these principles, as it obstructs tranquility and affection, thereby contributing to household instability. Based on the research findings in Karang Endah Village, silent treatment constitutes a real and recurring pattern of marital conflict triggered by everyday issues such as economic demands, stubborn attitudes, and minor misunderstandings. This practice is carried out by both husbands and wives as a means of avoiding open confrontation, yet it ultimately prolongs conflict and worsens relationships. In this village, silent treatment is not merely temporary silence but has become a passive-aggressive communication pattern that generates anxiety, feelings of neglect, emotional distance, and declining trust between partners. These conditions demonstrate that silent treatment has a negative impact on marital harmony and has the potential to lead to prolonged conflict (*syiqāq*) that threatens family integrity.

Rights and Obligations of Husband and Wife in Islamic Family Law

Each partner in a marriage, namely the husband and the wife, possesses equal status, rights, and obligations within marital life. In fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, commitment and mutual understanding from both parties are required in order to create a happy, harmonious, and prosperous family. The Compilation of Islamic Law (hereinafter referred to as KHI), Article 77 paragraphs (1-4) of Chapter XII, affirms that husbands and wives should associate with one another with affection, mutual respect, and provide both moral and material support, and that each should be able to maintain the honor of the other (Kementerian Agama RI, 2004, 2019). The noble mission and purpose of forming a family characterized by *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, as well as the balanced determination of the rights and obligations of both husband and wife, constitute part of the fundamental principles of marital relations in Islam, which emphasize the principle of justice. The fulfillment of the rights and obligations of spouses has been explained by Allah in His word in Qur'an Surah Ar-Rūm [30]:21, as follows:

وَمِنْ أَيْتَهُ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَرْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً أَنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٌ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ ۚ

Meaning: “And among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for people who reflect.” (Q.S. Ar-Rūm [30]: 21) (Kemenag RI, 2019).

The verse above normatively explains Islamic family law by affirming three objectives of marriage: *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (love), and *rahmah* (compassion). This verse not only establishes standards of marital harmony but also emphasizes the husband's obligation to fulfill the wife's rights, both in the form of financial support and good treatment (*mu 'āsharah bi al-ma 'rūf*). Juridically, the husband-wife relationship is understood as a reciprocal relationship (*mubādalah*), in which the right of one party constitutes the obligation of the other. Neglect of rights and obligations is not merely a legal violation but also a failure to implement the fundamental principles of the Qur'an. Thus, Qur'an Surah Ar-Rūm verse 21 functions as a normative spirit that directs spousal interaction toward inner tranquility in accordance with Islamic law.

Allah the Almighty further states in Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah [2]:228:

وَالْمُطَّافِقُ يَتَرَبَّصُ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ قُرُونٍ وَلَا يَجِدُ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْنِمَنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْضِهِمْ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَبَعْدُ لَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ بِرِدَهُنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا اصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ

حَكِيمٌ ۖ

Meaning: “Divorced women shall wait by themselves for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands have a better right to take them back during that period if they desire reconciliation. And due to them is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men have a degree over them. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.” (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:228) (Kemenag RI, 2019).

The verse above clarifies the Islamic view of marriage. In Islamic law, marriage is not merely a symbol of ownership or permissibility of biological relations, but rather a contract (*akad*) imbued with the value of worship and granting balanced rights to both husband and wife within the household, including the right to receive good treatment from one another. The equality of roles and duties between husband and wife in marital life is adjusted according to their respective natures, even though it is manifested in different forms of responsibility. A man has the role of head of the family, guide, and protector of family members. In addition, he bears the obligation to provide for all household

needs according to his ability, such as financial support, children's education, and other basic necessities. Conversely, the wife's role as a homemaker entails the primary obligation of devotion, both physically and emotionally, to her husband, within what is justified by Islamic law.

To ensure that the roles and responsibilities of both husband and wife are carried out properly, communication is essential to foster mutual understanding, align visions and missions, and resolve problems jointly. Communication is a crucial element in any relationship (Astuti & Triayunda, 2023). Islamic law, as a comprehensive guide to life, strongly encourages peaceful conflict resolution (*sulh*), rejects violence, opens space for discussion (*shūrā*), and upholds the value of justice ('*adl*). However, in practice, factors that disrupt marital harmony and challenge the implementation of conflict resolution in accordance with these values are still found, such as social pressure and ego imbalance between the two parties.

In Islamic family law, the rights of husband and wife include *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* (good and proper association), as stated in Qur'an Surah An-Nisa [4]:19:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرْثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَمَا كُرِهْتُمْ هُنَّ لَذَّهَبٌ بَعْضُهُنَّ لَذَّهَبٌ بَعْضُهُنَّ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ
وَعَالِشُرُونَ هُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوْنَا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ١٩

Meaning: "O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will. Do not treat them harshly in order to take back part of what you have given them, unless they commit a clear indecency. Live with them in kindness. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something while Allah has placed much good in it." (Q.S. An-Nisa [4]:19) (Kemenag RI, 2019).

This verse emphasizes the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf*, namely the husband's obligation to treat his wife in a good, appropriate, and courteous manner. From the perspective of Islamic family law, this provision indicates that a wife's rights are not limited to financial aspects but also include psychological and emotional protection. The command to continue acting kindly even when there are aspects of the wife that are disliked underscores the importance of healthy communication and the prohibition of actions that hurt a spouse's feelings. Juridically, Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 19 sets clear limits, indicating that a husband is not permitted to act arbitrarily toward his wife. Good treatment is positioned as a fundamental obligation to safeguard the wife's dignity; therefore, neglect of the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* may be regarded as a violation of immaterial rights. Thus, this verse strengthens the Islamic legal framework that marital relations must be grounded in humanitarian values, courtesy, and justice in order to prevent disharmony and psychological violence within the household.

Nusyuz and Syiqaq in Islamic Family Law

Etymologically, the term *nusyuz* refers to an attitude of disobedience or self-exaltation. In the context of marital life, *nusyuz* is understood as an act by either party husband or wife who neglects marital obligations, thereby triggering disharmony within the family (K.H. Ali Ma'shum, 1997; Munawar, 1997). Wahbah az-Zuhaili explains that *nusyuz* constitutes a deviation from domestic responsibilities that negatively affects the balance and harmony of the relationship between husband and wife. Acts of *nusyuz* are not limited to wives but may also be committed by husbands, for example by behaving harshly, neglecting, or deliberately ignoring their wives for extended periods without legitimate justification (Az-Zuhaili, 1985).

In the context of this study, *silent treatment* behavior may be categorized as a form of *nusyuz* committed by one of the spouses, as it reflects neglect of the obligation to communicate, respect one another, and maintain emotional interaction within the household. Consequently, such behavior may create imbalance in the marital relationship.

In addition to *nusyuz*, Islamic law also recognizes the concept of *syiqaq*, which refers to deep-seated conflict between husband and wife that leads toward marital breakdown. According to Wahbah az-Zuhaili, *syiqaq* represents an advanced stage of *nusyuz* that arises when marital conflicts are not promptly addressed, resulting in relational rupture. In other words, *silent treatment* practiced continuously and over a prolonged period may develop from emotional *nusyuz* into *syiqaq*, which requires a mediation process (*taḥkīm*) to restore family harmony (Az-Zuhaili, 1985).

Therefore, from the perspective of Islamic family law, *silent treatment* is not merely a violation of the principle of *mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf* (good and proper marital conduct), but also an indication of *nusyuz* and *syiqaq*. Both conditions must be addressed through Islamic legal and ethical approaches in order to establish a family characterized by harmony, love, and compassion (*sakinah*, *mawaddah*, *wa rahmah*).

From the perspective of Islamic family law, *silent treatment* may be categorized as a form of *nusyuz* (disobedience) or *syiqaq* (prolonged conflict). *Nusyuz* is defined as the disobedience of one party in fulfilling marital obligations, such as a wife refusing obedience or a husband neglecting the wife's rights (Hanif et al., 2023).

Based on interview findings, the majority of respondents (such as Mrs. Bungsu and Mr. Rohimat) regarded *silent treatment* as individual *nusyuz*, as it represents a form of subtle protest or disobedience, although some respondents (such as Mrs. Tya) rejected this view because they continued to fulfill marital obligations silently. However, in the second and third couples, *silent treatment* developed into *syiqaq*, where the conflict became mutual and difficult to resolve. From the perspective of Islamic family law, *silent treatment* may thus be categorized as either *nusyuz* (disobedience) or *syiqaq* (prolonged marital conflict). *Nusyuz* is defined as the failure of one party to fulfill marital obligations, such as a wife refusing obedience or a husband neglecting the wife's rights (Ibrahim, A. 2024).

The theory of *nusyuz* in Islam is based on Qur'an Surah An-Nisa [4]:34, as follows:

الرَّجُلُ قَوْاْمُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَا آنفُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصِّلَاّتُ فُرِّتْتُ لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُّوْرَهُنَّ فَعِظُّوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُنَّ فَلَا تَنْبَغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْهَا كَيْبِرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

Meaning: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given one more (strength) than the other and because they spend of their wealth. Therefore, righteous women are devoutly obedient and guard in the husband's absence what Allah has commanded them to guard. As for those women whose disobedience (*nusyuz*) you fear, admonish them, abandon them in bed, and strike them lightly. But if they obey you, do not seek means against them. Indeed, Allah is Most High, Most Great." (Q.S. An-Nisa [4]:34) (Kemenag RI, 2019).

This verse provides an overview of the characteristics of a righteous wife, namely obedience to Allah, preservation of honor, and protection of the husband's property. The verse also anticipates the possibility of *nusyuz*, defined as disobedience or non-compliance with obligations prescribed by Islamic law that may disrupt marital stability. In this context, Islam grants husbands the authority to take corrective measures gradually, beginning with advice and continuing to separation of beds, as a legal mechanism to restore harmony rather than as a justification for violence. The verse emphasizes that rights and obligations within marriage must be fulfilled with discipline, and that non-compliance (*nusyuz*) carries legal consequences and clear resolution procedures to safeguard marital integrity.

Meanwhile, *syiqaq* is addressed in Qur'an Surah An-Nisa [4]:35:

وَإِنْ خَفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنَهُمَا فَابْعُثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِمَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا اصْلَاحًا يُوَقِّي اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْهَا حَيْرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Meaning: “*If you fear a breach between the two, appoint an arbitrator from his family and an arbitrator from her family. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will cause it between them. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.*” (QS An-Nisa [4]:35) (Kemenag RI, 2019).

Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 35 provides a legal solution when marital conflict reaches a deadlock and cannot be resolved independently by the couple. The verse establishes a procedure for appointing *hakam* (mediators) from each family to intervene objectively in order to identify the best possible resolution.

Within the theory of *syiqaq*, this verse affirms that Islam prioritizes mediation to preserve marital unity. The primary duty of the *hakam* is to pursue *islāh* (reconciliation) by identifying the root causes of conflict and mediating the interests of both parties. However, if reconciliation cannot be achieved, *syiqaq* may serve as a legitimate legal basis for divorce in order to prevent greater harm. Thus, Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 35 positions *syiqaq* as a legal emergency condition that requires third-party intervention to ensure justice for both husband and wife.

Analysis of Islamic Family Law on Silent Treatment in Karang Endah Village, Terbanggi Besar District, Central Lampung Regency

The analysis of interview results in Karang Endah Village shows that the practice of silent treatment is closely related to the concepts of *nusyūz* and *syiqāq* in Islamic family law. In the first couple, Mr. Rohimat and Mrs. Bungsu Hari Martini, the act of deliberately remaining silent toward one's spouse is categorized as a form of *nusyūz*, as it reflects a subtle form of defiance of the obligation to communicate. Mrs. Bungsu admitted that this behavior was intended as a form of protest to avoid open conflict; however, it resulted in the neglect of emotional and spiritual support (*nafkah batin*). Recurrent tension later developed into *syiqāq*, marked by the involvement of a third party (a relative) who intervened as a mediator to resolve the conflict. This indicates that silent treatment can transform from individual *nusyūz* into collective *syiqāq* if not promptly addressed. From the perspective of Islamic law, such behavior toward one's spouse may be deemed *haram*. This judgment is grounded in the principle that fulfilling emotional needs and maintaining good communication are absolute obligations in marriage. If silent treatment is carried out as an act of defiance (*nusyūz*), intentionally cutting off communication and emotional support over a long period until it causes conflict (*syiqāq*), then it exceeds the permissible limits of *al-hajr*. Moreover, it violates the prohibition against shunning others for more than three days, especially within the bond of *mīthāqan ghalīzān* (a solemn and binding covenant). Due to its destructive impact on marital integrity, its legal status is determined to be *haram*.

In the second couple, Mr. Anggi and Mrs. Tya Puspita Dewi, silent treatment is more dominantly categorized as *syiqāq*. Although Mrs. Tya continued to fulfill her physical domestic obligations, her refusal to communicate created misunderstandings and was perceived as neglect of communicative responsibility. Mr. Anggi viewed this behavior as triggering mutual quarrels fueled by the ego of each party. The recurring and independently irresolvable conflicts demonstrate that, in this case, silent treatment is not merely a form of protest but a real manifestation of *syiqāq*, where marital disharmony arises from a lack of openness and healthy interaction. From the perspective of Islamic law, this behavior is categorized as *makrūh tāhrīm* (reprehensible and close to *haram*). Although physical marital obligations are still fulfilled, the deliberate neglect of two-way communication undermines the essence of marriage. Its *makrūh* status arises because such behavior obstructs the attainment of a *sakinah* marriage characterized by tranquility and affection. However, when this attitude is repeatedly practiced and leads to quarrels driven by mutual ego, it approaches *haram* due to the *darar* (harm) inflicted on the mental well-being of the spouse. In Islam, any form of continuous harm is strictly prohibited; therefore, this behavior has the potential to damage marital unity.

Meanwhile, in the third couple, Mr. Raffi and Mrs. Aina Latifah, silent treatment tends to fall under the category of individual *nusyūz*. Their disputes are generally triggered by emotional factors, such as Mrs. Aina's frustration at not being listened to or Mr. Raffi's tendency to avoid problems. This behavior is considered a form of neglect toward one's spouse that can cause disappointment and weaken psychological well-being. However, their conflicts have not reached the level of *syiqāq*, as the tension does not persist for long and can still be resolved independently without involving a third party. In Islamic legal analysis, this behavior is categorized as *makrūh*, because the silent treatment remains within reasonable emotional limits and occurs briefly. Although there is an element of neglect that may weaken the spouse's psychological condition, as long as it does not cause permanent harm or lead to division (*syiqāq*) and is promptly resolved through reconciliation (*islāh*), it is regarded as a form of *khilāfiyyah* behavior that is disliked by Allah but has not reached the level of a major sin or *haram*.

Overall, this study affirms that silent treatment constitutes a form of neglect of immaterial obligations within marriage. If left unaddressed, this behavior has the potential to undermine family stability, either through *nusyūz* that weakens emotional bonds or through *syiqāq* that results in prolonged conflict. Therefore, silent treatment must be understood as a serious issue from the perspective of Islamic law, as it disrupts the fundamental principles of marriage based on *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

From the perspective of Islamic law, silent treatment bears similarities to the concept of *al-hajr*. Etymologically, *al-hajr* means *al-bu'd* (distancing), *al-man'* (preventing), or *at-tark* (abandoning). In juristic terminology, *al-hajr* refers to the act of withdrawing or distancing oneself from another person, either in communication or physical interaction. In the marital context, Qur'an Surah An-Nisa [4]:34 mentions *al-hajr* as one of the legal instruments that may be employed in dealing with *nusyūz*, namely a wife's disobedience or defiance of obligations prescribed by Islamic law. The verse emphasizes the husband's position as the head of the family with responsibility for financial maintenance, while the wife is required to obey and safeguard her honor. Islam also regulates disciplinary steps that a husband may take gradually, beginning with advice, followed by *al-hajr* (separation of beds), and only if these measures fail may further steps be considered.

This analysis demonstrates that *al-hajr* in Islam is not merely silence or withdrawal, but a measured educational mechanism. Its objective is to correct behavior and restore marital harmony, not to inflict emotional harm or pressure. Thus, *al-hajr* possesses clear normative and juridical dimensions and is positioned as part of a conflict-resolution procedure consistent with the principle of *islāh* (reconciliation).

However, the findings in Karang Endah Village reveal a subtle distinction between silent treatment as practiced by the community and the concept of *al-hajr* prescribed by Islamic law. Silent treatment observed in the field more often emerges as an emotional protest or expression of dissatisfaction, rather than as an educational instrument. The act of remaining silent by one spouse actually obstructs communication, creates misunderstandings, and potentially damages the psychological condition of the other. The resulting impact is not behavioral improvement, but emotional tension that may lead to *nusyūz* or even develop into *syiqāq* if the conflict persists.

Thus, although linguistically silent treatment and *al-hajr* share similar meanings, their effectiveness depends greatly on the underlying intention and purpose. When carried out in accordance with the spirit of Qur'an Surah An-Nisa [4]:34, *al-hajr* can serve as a constructive means of reconciliation (*islāh*). Conversely, when practiced merely as a form of neglect of obligations or emotional venting, silence may be categorized as *nusyūz* and potentially trigger marital disintegration (*syiqāq*). Therefore, it is crucial to distinguish between silent treatment as a harmful emotional behavior and *al-hajr* as a measured legal instrument, in order to prevent misuse of the concept in marital life.

Conclusion

Based on an empirical juridical analysis of the phenomenon of silent treatment in Karang Endah Village, it can be concluded that silent treatment is proven to be a trigger of marital conflict in the area. The act of deliberately ignoring one's spouse emerges as a form of intentional neglect of communication, usually originating from specific disputes. Contributing factors include economic pressure, stubborn personality traits, and frustration arising from feeling unheard. Although intended as a subtle protest or a means of avoiding confrontation, this practice instead generates tension, as spouses feel ignored and unappreciated.

The impact of silent treatment is significant on the fulfillment of spouses' rights and obligations. Communication barriers disrupt marital interaction, particularly in fulfilling emotional and spiritual needs (*nafkah batin*). As a result, harmony deteriorates, trust issues arise, and deep emotional disappointment develops in one party. From the perspective of Islamic family law, the legal status of silent treatment varies across couples. In the case of Mr. Rohimat and Mrs. Bungsu, the behavior is categorized as *haram* because it constitutes defiance (*nusyūz*) that neglects emotional obligations and leads to prolonged conflict (*syiqāq*) requiring third-party intervention. In the case of Mr. Anggi and Mrs. Tya Puspita, the status is *makrūh* approaching *haram*; although physical obligations are fulfilled, mutual silence is considered neglect of communication that triggers recurring disputes. Meanwhile, in the case of Mr. Raffi and Mrs. Aina Latifah, the status is *makrūh*, because although the behavior reflects indifference that harms mental well-being, the conflicts are relatively brief and can still be resolved independently without mediation.

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