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Toward a Wasathiyah-Based Resolution of Marital Conflict: Integrating Emotion Regulation and Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah in Islamic Family Law

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Abstract

The resolution of marital conflict in Islamic Family Law still faces the challenge of reconciling the orientation towards reconciliation with the need to protect rights, justice, and the psychological well-being of spouses. This study aims to analyse the construction of marital conflict resolution based on wasathiyah and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, to examine the relevance of emotion regulation in dispute resolution, and to formulate a conceptual framework that integrates these three perspectives. It uses a library-based integrative literature review with an interdisciplinary normative-conceptual legal and psychological approach, analysed through qualitative content analysis with a deductive-inductive strategy, critical comparison across theories, and conceptual synthesis. The synthesis indicates that wasathiyah can be positioned as a principle of proportional justice, emotion regulation as an approach to understanding the psychological dynamics and communication of couples, and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as a framework for evaluating welfare and the protection of rights. On this basis, the study proposes the Wasathi-Maqāṣidi Marital Conflict Resolution Model with six stages: identification of the character of the conflict, examination of safety and the protection of rights, emotion management, normative-maqāṣidi evaluation, determination of resolution alternatives, and evaluation of the sustained fulfilment of rights. Its novelty lies in a decision-making framework that places safety and substantive justice as primary considerations, so that success is not measured solely by reconciliation. The study contributes to an Islamic Family Law more responsive to psychological dimensions, the protection of rights, and moderation. The proposed model still requires empirical validation.

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A. Introduction

In Islam, marriage is understood not merely as a legal bond that makes the relationship between a man and a woman lawful, but also as a covenant that carries moral, spiritual, psychological, and social responsibilities. The Qur'an describes marriage as a space for tranquillity (*sakinah*), affection

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(*mawaddah*), and compassion (*raḥmah*), as stated in QS. al-Rūm [30]: 21. Married life, however, does not always follow this normative ideal. Differing expectations, economic pressure, an unequal division of domestic responsibilities, communication failure, and an inability to manage emotions can turn a relationship built on affection into one marked by conflict. From the perspective of Islamic law, legal understanding must take into account the purpose of human welfare through a holistic and multidimensional approach. This view implies that the resolution of marital conflict cannot be judged only by whether the marriage survives, but also by the quality of justice, the protection of dignity, and the well-being of the parties involved (Auda, 2021).

Conflict is part of the dynamics of any human relationship. The more fundamental question is not whether conflict occurs, but how spouses understand, respond to, and resolve the differences that arise in their life together. Gross's process model of emotion regulation explains that people can influence the emotions they experience, including when emotions arise, how they are interpreted, and how emotional responses are expressed (Gross, 1998; Gross & Ford, 2024). In marriage this capacity matters, because anger, disappointment, and the feeling of not being valued can worsen a dispute if they are not managed constructively. The longitudinal study by Bloch et al. (2014) showed a relationship between the regulation of negative emotion and marital satisfaction, indicating that the resolution of family conflict cannot rely only on formal legal approaches and requires an understanding of the psychological dynamics of couples.

In the Islamic tradition, the resolution of disputes between husband and wife rests on the principles of *iṣlāḥ* (repairing the relationship), *syūrā* (consultation), and *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* (treating one's spouse kindly), while QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 35 provides the basis for involving arbiters when a marital dispute occurs. This concept of peace, however, must be placed within a framework of justice so that it does not become a demand to preserve a marriage regardless of the safety and dignity of the spouses. A study of wasathiyah-based mediation in religious courts showed that moderation, balance, proportional justice, and consultation can strengthen the resolution of family disputes (Khairuddin, 2025). Wasathiyah can therefore be developed not merely as an ethic of peace, but as a principle that directs conflict resolution towards substantive justice. In Indonesia, data from Statistics Indonesia on the causes of divorce in 2024 show that continuous disputes and quarrels are an important category across provinces; such administrative data cannot explain the psychological processes behind a breakdown, but they indicate that prolonged conflict deserves more serious attention in family law (Badan Pusat Statistik, n.d.). A longitudinal study of 519 married couples in South Korea linked emotion regulation difficulties with marital conflict and subjective happiness, although its results cannot be generalised directly to Indonesian Muslim families (Eoh et al., 2026).

In the Indonesian judicial system, mediation has gained formal legitimacy through Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2016 on Mediation Procedures in Court, but a legal procedure does not by itself guarantee a resolution that meets the psychological needs and protects the rights of the parties (Peraturan Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 2016 Tentang Prosedur Mediasi Di Pengadilan., 2016). Karmawan (2020) emphasises that the success of mediation depends on mediator professionalism and legal culture, while Khairuddin (2025) argues that mediation must internalise balance and justice rather than stop at procedural compliance. The problem becomes more complex when conflict involves violence, intimidation, economic dependence, or unequal power, where pressure to reconcile can disadvantage the more vulnerable party if safety and freedom of choice are ignored. Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026) identified the importance of safety, unequal relations, emotional readiness, and child protection in developing maqāṣid-based family mediation, which shows that conflict resolution requires considerations beyond a formal agreement. The academic question is therefore not only how to preserve a marriage, but how to determine the fairest, safest, and most beneficial form of resolution for the character of the conflict at hand.

Studies of marital conflict resolution have developed through legal, psychological, and religious approaches. In Islamic family law, Karmawan (2020) examined mediation in religious courts with an emphasis on regulatory implementation, mediator professionalism, and legal culture, and Khairuddin (2025) placed the wasathiyah principles of *tawassuṭ*, *tawāzun*, *i'tidāl*, *syūrā*, and *iṣlāḥ* at the basis of family mediation. Recent work has linked divorce mediation with *maqāṣid* and local custom

(Fikri et al., 2023), combined psychological aspects and Islamic values in court mediation (Gussevi et al., 2026), proposed integrating the classical *ḥakam* with court-annexed mediation (Marhendi & Adrianto, 2026), and examined the place of *maqāṣid* in electronic mediation (Syamsuar et al., 2026). In psychology, Gross (1998) identified five points of intervention in emotion generation, and later studies have linked emotion regulation difficulties and conflict styles with marital satisfaction (Bloch et al., 2014; Bülbül et al., 2024; Eoh et al., 2026). These psychological studies operate mainly within their own tradition and need additional reasoning to connect them with Islamic Family Law. Auda's systems approach to *maqāṣid*, which stresses wholeness, multidimensionality, openness, and purposefulness, offers such a bridge, because one decision on a marital conflict can have different consequences for safety, psychological well-being, economic rights, and children (Auda, 2021). Most closely related, Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026) formulated a four-phase maqāṣid-based family mediation model of pre-mediation, mediation, agreement, and post-mediation monitoring that already integrates emotional readiness, empathic communication, the weighing of benefit and harm (*maṣlaḥah* and *mafsadah*), and the protection of rights.

Combining justice, psychological aspects, and *maqāṣid* therefore cannot be claimed as entirely new. The gap addressed here is narrower. It concerns, first, the order of considerations and the limits of the eligibility of reconciliation according to the type of conflict, with a safety examination as a precondition before joint dialogue; this is a conceptual position to be tested, not a claim that earlier models ignore safety. Second, it concerns the distinct functions of three tools: Gross's theory of emotion regulation explains psychological responses and communication, wasathiyah as discussed by Kamali (2015) provides an orientation of justice and proportionality, and *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* in Auda's approach assesses legal aims and consequences (Auda, 2021; Gross, 1998; Kamali, 2015). Without this distinction, emotional calm can be mistaken for settled rights, and an agreement can be regarded as fair without examining threats, power relations, or children's rights. The proposed novelty is thus a staged decision construction in which reconciliation is considered only after safety, voluntariness, and rights have been examined, and evaluation continues beyond the agreement to its consequences; it is a theoretical proposition, not a mediation procedure of proven effectiveness.

Accordingly, this study aims to critically analyse the construction of marital conflict resolution in Islamic Family Law, to explain the relevance of emotion regulation to the dynamics of marital conflict, and to formulate a conflict resolution framework based on wasathiyah and *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* that is oriented towards substantive justice. It starts from the view that family law must explain not only how a dispute is resolved procedurally, but also why a particular form of resolution is considered just and beneficial. The unit of analysis is the body of normative, theoretical, and empirical literature on marital conflict and its resolution.

The Methods section describes the review design and analytical steps. The Results present the construction of conflict resolution under wasathiyah and *maqāṣid*, the *fiqh* argument, the integration of emotion regulation, and the six-stage model. The Discussion compares the model with previous research and sets out its dimensions of success, implications, and limitations, followed by the Conclusion.

B. Methods

This study is qualitative library research with an integrative literature review design and an interdisciplinary normative-conceptual and psychological approach. The design was chosen to compare arguments from Islamic Family Law, the principle of wasathiyah, the theory of emotion regulation, and *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, and then to formulate a conceptual synthesis. Snyder (2019), Torraco (2005), and Whittemore and Knafl (2005) serve as the methodological foundation, consistent with more recent guidance that integrative reviews aim to generate new frameworks by combining diverse bodies of literature (Cronin & George, 2023). The study is not presented as a systematic literature review or as a test of the effectiveness of an intervention.

The materials comprise normative sources (the Qur'an, hadith, and relevant regulations), *fiqh* literature and *maqāṣid* thought, theories of emotion regulation, and scholarly publications on mediation and marital conflict. The literature was grouped by the function of each source: normative

foundations, theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and earlier resolution models. Relevance was judged by the direct connection to marital conflict, the clarity of argument, and the traceability of the source. Because the study follows the logic of an integrative review rather than a systematic review, sources were selected purposively according to their conceptual relevance, and no exhaustive count of database records is reported.

Sources were included when they met four criteria: (1) they addressed marital conflict and its resolution (iṣlāḥ, ṣulḥ, ḥakam, or family mediation), emotion regulation in couples, wasathiyah, or maqāṣid al-sharīʿah; (2) they were primary normative texts, classical or contemporary scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, or official statistics and regulations; (3) they were written in Arabic, English, or Indonesian; and (4) their argument or data could be traced to an identifiable publication. Sources were excluded when they were popular or non-scholarly writings, when they discussed family relations without bearing on conflict resolution, or when their bibliographic details could not be verified. Foundational theoretical works were retained regardless of their publication year, while the empirical literature and the studies on Indonesian Islamic family law were drawn mainly from publications between 2019 and 2026. In preparing this version of the article, the literature was updated through searches of the Crossref database and journal websites in November 2026, using combinations of terms such as "marital conflict", "emotion regulation", "family mediation", "ḥakam", "syiqāq", "maqāṣid al-sharīʿah", and "wasathiyah". The bibliographic details of each added source were checked against its DOI or publisher page.

The analysis proceeded through five steps: (1) mapping the normative concepts of *iṣlāḥ*, *syiqāq*, *ḥakam*, and family rights and obligations; (2) a critical reading of emotion regulation theory and the values of wasathiyah; (3) a comparison with earlier mediation models, especially that of Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026); (4) identifying points of convergence, limits of application, and tensions between the approaches; and (5) constructing a six-stage conceptual model with illustrative conflict scenarios. The synthesis was carried out deductively from norms and theories, and inductively from patterns of argument in the reviewed studies. Figure 1 summarises this procedure.

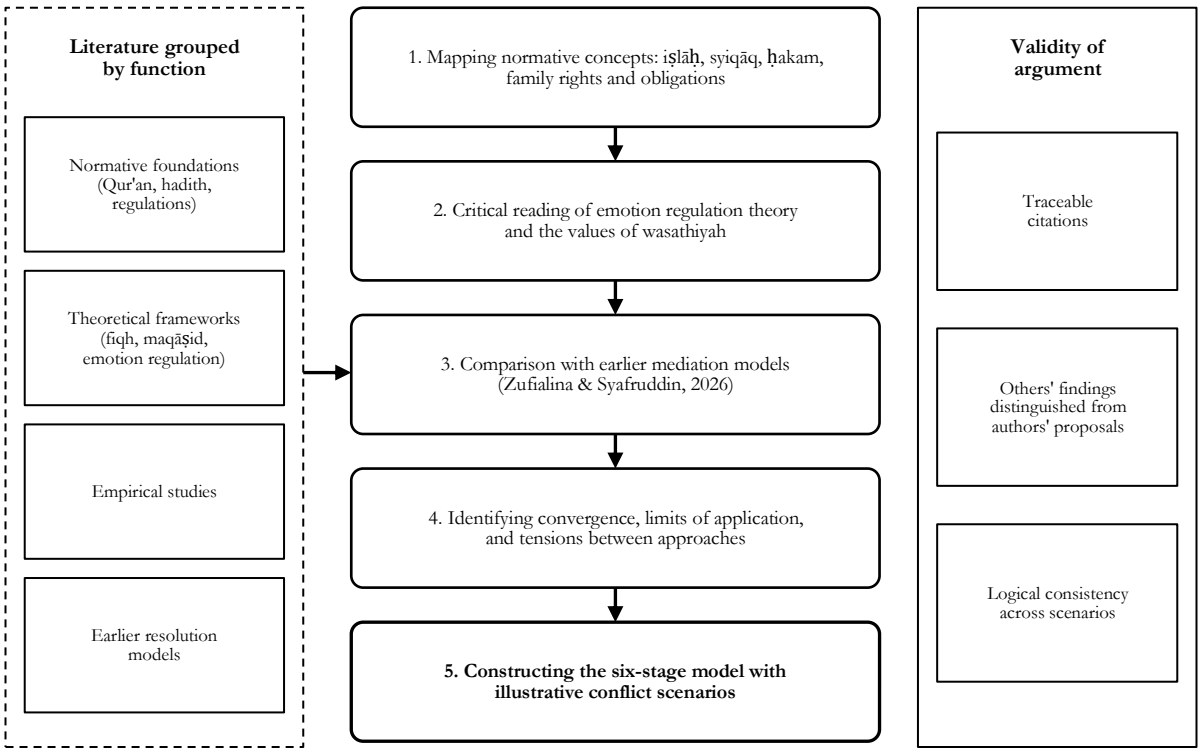


Figure 1. Procedure of the integrative literature review

Source: Authors' elaboration (2026).

Figure 1 shows that the review moved from a functional grouping of sources, through a staged critical analysis, to the construction of the model. The validity of the argument was pursued through traceable citations, a clear distinction between other researchers' empirical findings and the authors' proposals, and checks of logical consistency across scenarios; the model has not yet been validated by an expert panel or field data. The term "results" therefore refers to the results of conceptual analysis and synthesis, not to observations in courts or families, and judgements about danger, the suitability of mediation, and protective action in practice still require professional authority and applicable law.

C. Results

The Construction of Marital Conflict Resolution under Wasathiyah and Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah

Marriage in Islam has legal, moral, spiritual, and humanitarian dimensions, and rests not only on the formal fulfilment of rights and obligations but also on the responsibility to create tranquillity, affection, and respect for each other's dignity. QS. al-Rūm [30]: 21 places *sakīnah*, *mawaddah*, and *raḥmah* as fundamental values of married life, while QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 19 affirms *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*, the duty to treat one's spouse properly. The continuity of a marriage therefore cannot be separated from the quality of the relationship within it, and the resolution of marital conflict should be evaluated not only by whether the marriage survives, but also by whether it safeguards the aims of Islamic law, above all justice, welfare, and the protection of rights (Auda, 2021).

Differences in character, life experience, emotional needs, economic conditions, and expectations can create tension that grows into quarrels, but Islamic Family Law does not regard every dispute as an automatic reason to end a marriage, and provides mechanisms of dialogue, repair, and arbitration where needed. QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 35 describes the appointment of one *ḥakam* from the husband's family and one from the wife's family when a dispute is feared, which recognises the need for outside intervention when spouses cannot resolve a dispute on their own. In the Indonesian context, Karmawan (2020) shows that mediation in religious courts is an important instrument of dispute resolution, but its success is closely tied to the professionalism of mediators and the legal culture of society. Peace mechanisms therefore need institutional capacity and a sound process, not only normative legitimacy.

At the conceptual level, wasathiyah explains the orientation of a proportional resolution. It cannot be reduced to a compromise that always requires both parties to reduce their demands equally. It must instead be read together with *tawāzun* (balance), *i'tidāl* (justice), *syūrā* (consultation), and *iṣlāḥ* (repair of the relationship). Balance here does not mean treating the party who commits a violation and the party who suffers harm as equals, but weighing rights, obligations, circumstances, and the consequences of a resolution fairly. Auda criticises reductionist legal approaches and offers a multidimensional, purpose-oriented reading, which provides a basis for understanding wasathiyah as a principle of evaluation that considers substantive justice rather than the mere achievement of a formal agreement (Auda, 2021).

The need to distinguish procedural peace from substantive justice becomes sharper when conflict involves unequal power. An agreement between husband and wife does not necessarily reflect free will if one party faces threats, economic dependence, or family pressure. Mediators in Indonesian religious courts use an approach that combines Islamic values with Asian family mediation practices, including moral, religious, and family-harmony considerations, which shows that mediation in Muslim societies has a complex social and cultural character (Wirdyaningsih et al., 2026). The orientation towards family harmony must nevertheless be balanced by an assessment of equal participation and the protection of rights, so that harmony is not understood merely as the absence of visible conflict.

A reading of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* offers a broader basis for judging a resolution. For al-Shāṭibī, human welfare, understood through the protection of basic human needs, is central to the making and application of law, and Auda develops this into a systems approach attentive to interconnected dimensions, social change, and the consequences of applying the law. Applied to marital conflict, assessment covers not only the continuity of the marriage but also the protection of life, intellect, progeny, and property, and the relevant dimensions of dignity and rights. Preserving a marriage is a benefit when the spouses can repair their relationship safely and voluntarily, but when its continuation

causes serious harm, protecting safety and rights may require a different resolution. *Maqāṣid* thus serve to assess the aims and consequences of a decision, not as a pretext that every resolution must end in reconciliation (Auda, 2021).

The interests of children likewise call for substantive protection. Turnip et al. (2024) showed that a *maṣlaḥah* approach to co-parenting in divorce cases can strengthen children's rights after a marriage ends, extending conflict resolution from the spousal relationship to the family's responsibility towards its children. Within wasathiyah, children's interests should not be used to pressure one spouse to remain in a dangerous relationship; protecting them requires assessing the care environment, the fulfilment of needs, and continued parental responsibility, whether the marriage continues or ends lawfully.

Recent empirical research makes it clearer that family dispute resolution does not take place in a neutral social space. A study in the religious courts of Surabaya, Semarang, and Bandung shows that women who file for divorce can use the legal process to voice experiences of violence, neglect, and household problems previously confined to the private sphere, although the process also carries emotional and administrative burdens (Warnis et al., 2026). For a moderate Islamic Family Law, this finding matters because the success of conflict resolution should not be determined solely by arbiters or legal institutions, but should take into account the voices and experiences of the parties affected.

The synthesis thus shows that marital conflict resolution in Islamic Family Law combines normative legitimacy, the protection of rights, and an assessment of consequences for welfare. Wasathiyah provides an orientation of justice and proportionality, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* a framework for evaluating the aims and effects of each alternative, and linking them distinguishes reconciliation as one possible resolution from substantive justice as the more fundamental measure. Peace is judged successful when it is voluntary, safe, and does not sacrifice the rights of the vulnerable party, while lawful separation can also accord with welfare when it is necessary to prevent harm and protect the dignity of the family (Auda, 2021; Turnip et al., 2024; Warnis et al., 2026).

Deepening the Fiqh Argument: Syiqāq, Ḥakam, Ṣulḥ, and the Prevention of Harm

Normatively, QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 35 links the condition of *syiqāq* with the appointment of two *ḥakam*, one from the family of each spouse. The verse shows that a conflict that has developed into a serious dispute requires examination and an effort at repair through arbiters, but it cannot be read as a guarantee that every dispute must end in the reunion of the couple. The phrase relating to the intention of *iṣlāḥ* points to the importance of an orientation towards repair, while the application of the *ḥakam* mechanism in *fiqh* involves details of authority on which the jurists disagree (Al-Nawawī, n.d.). This study therefore distinguishes the function of the *ḥakam* in *fiqh* discourse from that of the court mediator under Indonesian procedural law.

In household disputes, *iṣlāḥ* and *ṣulḥ* are recommended aims, but the validity of an agreement must still be judged by its object and consequences. QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 128 recognises the possibility of resolution through peace, while QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 231 forbids keeping a marriage in order to cause harm. Read together, reconciliation is valuable when it is accompanied by consent and the fulfilment of rights, not when an agreement preserves harm or coercion. The phrase "peace is better" should therefore not be used as an automatic basis for dispensing with the examination of safety and justice (QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 128; QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 231).

The legal maxim *al-ḍarar yuzāl* (harm must be removed) supports the assessment of the consequences of a resolution, but its application cannot bypass the establishment of facts, the position of rights and obligations, or the provisions of positive law. In the proposed model, the maxim is placed at the stage of normative-maqāṣidi evaluation: when alternative resolutions are equally possible procedurally, they are compared according to their potential for harm, the continuity of the fulfilment of rights, and their effect on children. This assessment is the authors' analytical construction, not a universal *fatwā* for every marital case.

This legal reasoning requires a distinction between *nusyūz*, *syiqāq*, and violence. In *fiqh*, *nusyūz* concerns the violation of marital obligations, while *syiqāq* refers to a dispute that has disrupted the relationship of both parties and requires handling (Hanif et al., 2023). Violence, intimidation, and

coercion must be examined on the basis of facts and legal protections, and cannot be reduced to "an inability to manage emotions"; the distinction prevents psychological models from concealing legal violations and allows different interventions by type of conflict. Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2016 provides the procedural framework for court mediation, and the model is neither a substitute for these obligations nor a grant of new authority to mediators. The proposed safety examination is an ethical and rights-based consideration in choosing forms of communication and referrals, carried out under regulations, institutional authority, and professional handling where threats or violence exist (Peraturan Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 2016 Tentang Prosedur Mediasi Di Pengadilan., 2016).

Integrating Emotion Regulation with Wasathiyah and Maqāṣid al-Sharīʻah

Marital conflict also involves emotional experiences that shape how spouses understand and respond to a problem. Quarrels often escalate not because the problem is large, but because of how it is perceived and communicated, as feeling unappreciated, anger, anxiety, and disappointment produce defensive responses that block dialogue. Gross's process model shows that emotions can be managed at various stages of their formation, which provides a psychological basis for conflict resolution because reactions to conflict are not wholly fixed but can be understood and managed (Gross, 1998).

Gross's model distinguishes five families of strategies: situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation. Situation selection can mean not starting a sensitive conversation when a partner is in no state for constructive dialogue, and situation modification can involve adjusting the time, place, or manner of communication so that the dispute does not escalate (Gross, 1998). Attentional deployment reduces focus on stimuli that trigger anger, cognitive change revisits negative interpretations of a partner's actions, and response modulation controls emotional expression after a response has arisen. These are not a mediation procedure designed by Gross for Muslim couples, but psychological categories that can serve as analytical tools.

The strategies also differ in their effects. Cognitive reappraisal, the reinterpretation of an emotional situation, is associated with better affect and social relationships than habitual suppression of emotional expression (Gross & John, 2003). In marriage, silence does not always reflect acceptance: a couple may stop quarrelling while still harbouring fear, anger, or the feeling of not being valued. Managing emotions therefore cannot be equated with suppressing dissatisfaction, and constructive regulation requires recognising emotions, understanding their causes, and conveying problems without demeaning the other party. For Islamic Family Law, this helps distinguish peace born of shared awareness and willingness from a false calm that arises because one party cannot voice an objection. Recent couple research points in the same direction, showing that the way partners regulate each other's emotions during conflict is linked to their relational well-being and that such regulation varies across cultures (Li et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2025).

Empirical support comes from Bloch et al. (2014), whose longitudinal study linked the regulation of negative emotion during conflict with changes in marital satisfaction. This supports emotion regulation as one dimension of conflict resolution, but not the view that all conflicts can be resolved by improving emotional skills, since disputes arising from neglect, violence, or rights violations have structural and legal dimensions that individual psychological intervention cannot answer. Gross's theory must therefore be used proportionally: it helps explain emotional and communicative processes, but it does not replace an analysis of legal responsibility or relational injustice.

From an Islamic perspective, the capacity to manage emotions can be brought into dialogue with *ṣabr* (patience), *ḥilm* (self-restraint and forbearance), *rifq* (gentleness), and *iṣlaḥ*. These values shape how a person responds to a dispute without harming others, but they are not identical to emotion regulation: Gross's theory explains a psychological mechanism, whereas patience and self-restraint in Islam also carry a spiritual orientation and moral responsibility, and integration should not become a mere search for equivalent terms. In the framework of wasathiyah discussed by Kamali (2015), moderation is linked to broader ethical principles and their application in human life. Emotion

management can thus be positioned as a psychological capacity that supports the practice of moderation, as long as it is not interpreted as an obligation to endure injustice passively.

At this point, wasathiyah provides an evaluative dimension for the application of emotion regulation. Controlling anger can support *iṣlāḥ* by opening space for communication, but emotional control must not be used to silence claims about violated rights. A person can voice an objection firmly without violence, and such firmness does not contradict moderation. As a Qur'anic principle connected with ethics, balance, and proportionate conduct (Kamali, 2015), wasathiyah requires distinguishing the way a claim is expressed from its legitimacy: communication errors can be corrected through emotion management, but rights and obligations require separate normative examination. A couple that can speak calmly is not necessarily in a just relationship, just as a spouse who voices an objection emotionally does not necessarily have an illegitimate claim.

The *maqāṣid* approach strengthens this distinction by evaluating the real consequences of resolution strategies; for Auda, legal aims are understood through the interconnected dimensions of a human problem, so that emotion management must be considered in relation to safety, rights, family welfare, and children. Calming a quarrel may bring psychological benefit to a couple, but that benefit is not enough to conclude that the conflict is resolved if economic injustice or violence continues. Conversely, pursuing a legal resolution may involve emotional strain but still be necessary to protect rights and prevent greater harm. Integrating emotion regulation and *maqāṣid* thus makes it possible to distinguish short-term psychological benefit from the protection of more fundamental welfare (Auda, 2008).

Studies on the fulfilment of children's rights after divorce illustrate this distinction. Settling child maintenance through a peaceful agreement can produce an inadequate amount if the child's needs are not assessed objectively, which shows the limits of compromise-based resolution when it is not accompanied by an examination of substantive rights (Alamsyah et al., 2025). Read together with emotion regulation theory, this finding shows that a couple's success in managing tension during negotiation is not enough to indicate a successful resolution. An agreement must also be judged by its effects on the rights and needs of those who depend on it. Emotion regulation therefore facilitates the decision-making process, while *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and the principle of justice provide the basis for evaluating its content and consequences.

The relationship between these theories produces an important conceptual distinction. Emotion regulation operates at the level of psychological process, wasathiyah at the level of ethical orientation, and *maqāṣid* at the level of evaluating legal aims and consequences. Their relationship is functional and complementary rather than one in which a discipline replaces another: emotion regulation helps spouses and arbiters understand the emotions that affect communication, wasathiyah directs the process to be proportional and just, and *maqāṣid* weigh the options that better protect welfare and rights. This synthesis is the authors' analytical proposal developed from Gross, Kamali, and Auda, not an empirical model that these three authors have jointly established (Auda, 2021; Gross, 1998; Kamali, 2015).

The Six-Stage Wasathi-Maqāṣidi Model

The proposed model starts from the view that marital conflicts differ in character, so that no single uniform procedure fits all. A communication conflict arising from misunderstanding is not the same as a dispute involving violence, neglect, or coercion, and a conflict over economic responsibilities cannot always be resolved by an appeal to mutual understanding when a right has clearly not been fulfilled. Divorce cases filed by women can involve violence, infidelity, and neglect that are translated into legal claims, so that resolution requires an understanding of events, unequal relations, and legal positions (Warnis et al., 2026). The first stage is therefore a thorough identification of the character of the conflict, distinguishing triggers, the development of the dispute, emotional responses, and the consequences for the spouses and other family members, rather than a direct push towards reconciliation. Gross's theory helps explain how emotional responses form through the appraisal of and reaction to particular situations, but the analysis must be complemented by an examination of legal facts and power relations. A spouse's anxiety about the use of family money, for example, may

stem from negative perceptions or poor communication, but it may also arise from neglect of maintenance or unilateral economic control. Psychological assessment must not replace the examination of whether a right has been violated, and the first stage aims to distinguish emotional, behavioural, and legal problems before choosing the relevant form of resolution.

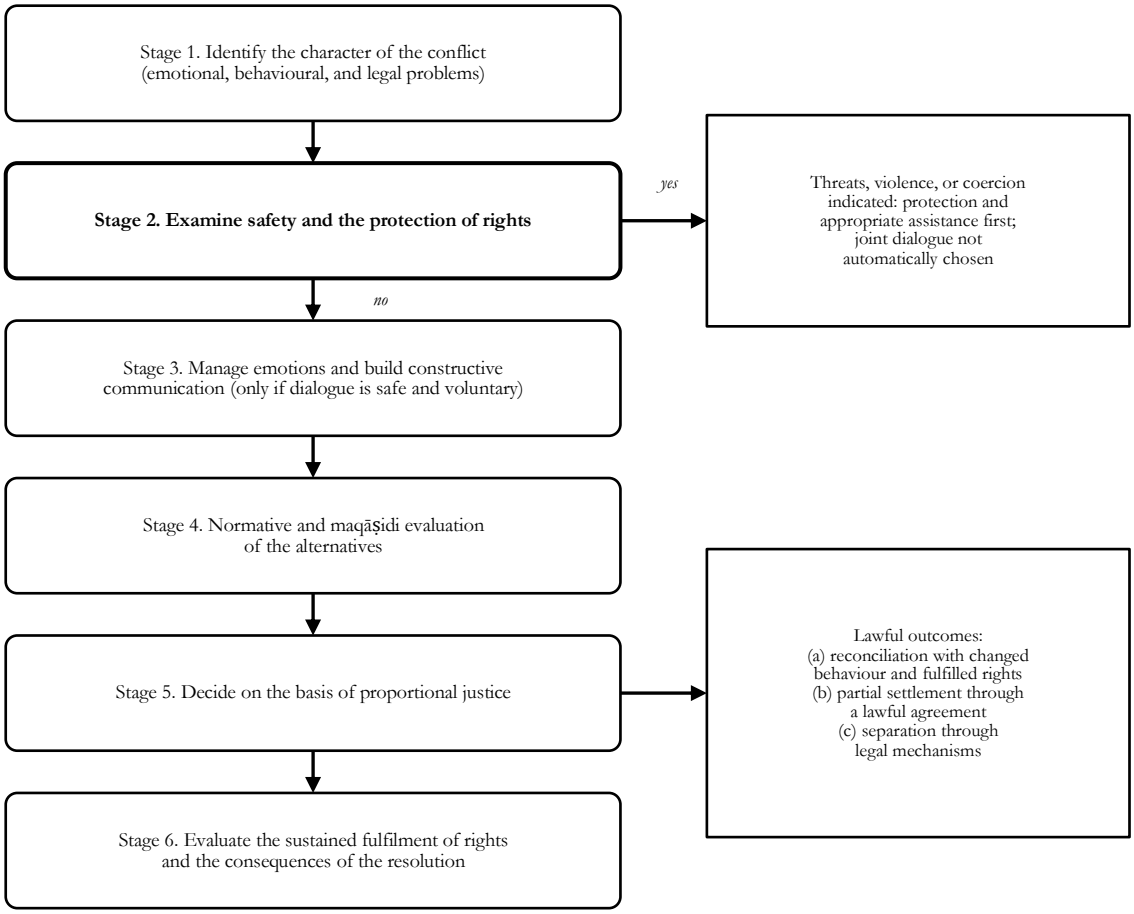
The second stage is the examination of safety and the protection of rights as a precondition for choosing a resolution process. Safety is not treated as an additional outcome after mediation, but as a consideration from the beginning. Where there are indications of violence, intimidation, threats, or coercion, priority is given to protection and access to safe and lawful assistance, and joint dialogue or reconciliation cannot be forced. This accords with the orientation of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* towards preventing harm and safeguarding fundamental human interests. A peaceful agreement does not necessarily provide adequate protection of rights if its content is not examined objectively, and the model therefore distinguishes readiness for dialogue from the legal and ethical eligibility of a reconciliation process (Alamsyah et al., 2025).

The third stage manages emotional conditions and develops constructive communication for couples who are safe enough to take part in dialogue voluntarily. Emotion regulation theory is used here to identify strategies that may help reduce escalation, such as choosing the time of communication, changing how objections are conveyed, revisiting negative assumptions, and managing verbal responses (Gross, 1998). These strategies are not used to force either spouse to accept harmful conduct. Bloch et al. (2014) provide empirical support for the relevance of emotion regulation to marital quality, and Gross and John (2003) show the different implications of cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. On this basis, a calmer dialogue can be understood as a condition that helps the resolution process, but not as proof that the substance of the conflict has been resolved.

The fourth stage is a normative and maqāṣidi evaluation, in which each alternative is analysed for its consistency with Islamic Family Law, the protection of rights, a balance of responsibilities, and its likely consequences for the spouses and children, using Auda's framework so that legal consideration attends to interconnected interests (Auda, 2021). In a dispute over maintenance, for example, an agreement is judged not only by the formal consent of both parties, but also by the reasonableness of the obligations, economic capacity, living needs, and children's rights. The studies by Turnip et al. (2024) on co-parenting and Alamsyah et al. (2025) on child maintenance support the importance of a welfare approach in protecting children's interests after divorce. *Maqāṣidi* evaluation thus examines the substance of the outcome, rather than lending religious legitimacy to an agreement that has already been made.

The fifth stage determines the resolution on the basis of proportional justice. The alternatives may be reconciliation accompanied by changes in behaviour and the fulfilment of rights, a partial settlement through a lawful agreement, or separation through legal mechanisms when the relationship can no longer be maintained safely and fairly. Compromise is not an absolute aim; rights, vulnerability, and the consequences of each option are weighed. Kamali's account of wasathiyah provides the ethical basis for proportionality, while Auda provides an evaluative orientation towards the aims of law (Auda, 2021; Kamali, 2015). A moderate decision is therefore not one that always lies between two demands, but one supported by normative argument and able to protect the interests that deserve priority legally and morally.

The sixth stage evaluates the sustained fulfilment of rights and the consequences of the resolution, because an agreement can look successful when signed and still not be implemented consistently. Alamsyah et al. (2025) show the importance of legal mechanisms responsive to child maintenance, which supports indicators on the implementation of obligations, the protection of children, and the possible recurrence of violations. In this library study, the evaluation stage is a proposed conceptual element, and its operational use must follow the authority of the courts, mediators, and support institutions involved. Figure 2 shows the sequence of the six stages and the safety gate.



Wasathi-Maqaṣidi Marital Conflict Resolution Model (conceptual proposal)

Figure 2. The six-stage Wasathi-Maqāṣidi Marital Conflict Resolution Model

Source: Authors' synthesis (2026).

Figure 2 shows that the model is not a straight line from conflict to reconciliation. The second stage works as a gate: where threats, violence, or coercion are indicated, the path leads to protection and appropriate assistance rather than automatically to joint dialogue, and the emotion management of the third stage applies only when dialogue is safe and voluntary. The fifth stage leaves open three lawful outcomes, and the sixth stage returns attention to whether rights are actually fulfilled after the decision. Table 1 sets out the theoretical basis, analytical focus, and expected result of each stage.

Table 1. Construction matrix of the Wasathi-Maqāṣidi Marital Conflict Resolution Model

Model stage	Theoretical basis	Analytical focus	Expected result
1. Identification of the character of the conflict	Gross (1998); Auda (2008)	Causes, emotions, behaviour, rights violations, and power relations	Understanding of the type and complexity of the conflict
2. Examination of safety and rights	*Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*	Risk of violence, intimidation, coercion, and harm	Priorities for protection set
3. Management of emotions and communication	Gross (1998); Gross & John (2003)	Emotion regulation and voluntary dialogue under safe conditions	More constructive communication
4. Normative and *maqāṣidi* evaluation	al-Shāṭibī; Auda (2008)	Legal legitimacy, benefit, harm, and the rights of spouses and children	Substantive assessment of the resolution alternatives
5. Determination of the decision in the manner of wasathiyah	Kamali (2015); Auda (2008)	Justice, proportionality, and free will	A lawful and accountable resolution
6. Evaluation of the implementation of the decision	Islamic Family Law; studies on the protection of rights	Fulfilment of agreements, maintenance, children's rights, and safety	A basis for assessing the sustained protection of rights

Source: Authors' synthesis (2026).

Table 1 shows that the model does not simply combine psychological theory with concepts of Islamic law. Each theory has a specific place in explaining the elements and stages of resolution. Gross's theory helps read emotional dynamics, *maqāṣid* serve as a framework for assessing legal aims and consequences, and wasathiyah is used to evaluate the fairness of the process and the proportionality of the decision. This division of functions is a synthesis developed in this study with reference to Auda and Kamali (Auda, 2021; Gross, 1998; Kamali, 2015).

As an initial conceptual test, the model can be applied to analytical scenarios. In a communication conflict without violence, spouses can be guided to identify the source of misunderstanding, understand their emotional responses, and consider dialogue and *iṣlāḥ*; Gross's theory explains strategies for managing emotions, while *syūrā* and wasathiyah evaluate the quality of communication and respect for each other's views (Gross, 1998). If the conflict concerns unfulfilled maintenance, dialogue alone is inadequate without examining economic responsibility and rights, and the study by Firdawaty et al. (2024) on reciprocity in the fulfilment of maintenance offers a reference for assessing family responsibility and cooperation between spouses. Where a dispute involves threats or violence, the model prioritises risk examination and the protection of rights before reconciliation is considered, so that applying wasathiyah is not identical to seeking agreement through a joint meeting, and proportional justice may require special protection for the threatened party. Warnis et al. (2026) show that women's legal consciousness turns the divorce process into a space for claims about violence and neglect; from the perspective of *maqāṣid*, recognising such experiences is part of assessing welfare. The model therefore yields different points of focus according to the character of the conflict, and treats protection and safety as ethical preconditions of a just practice of moderation.

D. Discussion

Testing the Novelty against Previous Research

The contribution of the proposed model must be distinguished from the maqāṣid-based mediation formulated by Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026), which integrates emotional readiness, empathic communication, the weighing of benefit and harm, the fairness of agreements, and post-mediation monitoring in four phases and already addresses safety and child protection. This article does not claim these elements as its exclusive findings. Table 2 compares the two models.

Table 2. Comparison of the proposed model with the maqāṣid-based mediation model of Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026)

Aspect	Zufialina & Syafruddin (2026)	Proposal of this article
Orientation	A process model of maqāṣid-based family mediation	A framework for choosing resolution alternatives according to the character and risk of the conflict
Stages	Four phases, from mediation to monitoring	Six analytical stages with a safety examination before dialogue
Emotion and safety	Emotional readiness and safety are discussed	Safe conditions set as a decision gate and as a limit on the use of emotion regulation
Outcome measure	The fairness of the agreement and its sustainability	An explicit distinction between process quality, outcome justice, and the sustained fulfilment of rights
Status of evidence	A normative-analytical conceptual model	Conceptual development; not yet empirically validated

Source: Authors' analysis based on Zufialina and Syafruddin (2026).

Table 2 shows that the difference lies in the logic of choosing a resolution path, not in the number of stages. First, the classification of conflict is placed before the choice of intervention, to distinguish communication disputes from alleged rights violations and threats to safety. Second, the safety examination is positioned as a decision gate: where threats or coercion are indicated, joint dialogue is not automatically chosen, and the need for protection and appropriate assistance takes priority. Third, *maqāṣidi* assessment is used to evaluate the substantive suitability of alternatives, so that a peaceful agreement is not considered sufficient without examining maintenance, children's rights, free will, and long-term effects. Fourth, the outcome is read through three separate measures: the safety of the process, the fairness of the decision's content, and the sustained fulfilment of rights. These four points are theoretical propositions for testing, not results of empirical validation. The claim of novelty is limited to the explicit articulation of the safety gate, the relationships between stages, and the criteria for evaluating decisions within one model; it is relative to the literature analysed, and the contribution is better described as a specification of a conceptual framework than as a wholly new principle of *maqāṣid*, wasathiyah, or emotion regulation (Torraco, 2005; Zufialina & Syafruddin, 2026).

Compared with other recent studies, the model sits between two strands. Indonesian studies of court mediation stress the conditions of successful mediation and the value of reconciliation (Karmawan, 2020; Kasim & Karim, 2025; Khairuddin, 2025), some proposing to revitalise local custom, the classical *ḥakam*, or Islamic values within it (Fikri et al., 2023; Gussevi et al., 2026; Marhendi & Adrianto, 2026). Others warn that reconciliation-oriented practice may reinforce gender hierarchies or leave post-divorce rights unenforced, as in the handling of post-divorce *mut'ah* (Izzati, 2025), and that emotionally charged statements in divorce raise questions of legal certainty (Ahmad et al., 2026). The model shares the first strand's commitment to *iṣlāḥ*, but follows the second in treating rights and safety as conditions rather than by-products of peace. The same tension appears in studies that read local divorce customs and digital mediation through *maqāṣid* (Azhari et al., 2024; Syamsuar et al., 2026), and in work on the silent treatment as a cause of *syiqāq* that calls for an active role of the *ḥakam* (Khairiah et al., 2026). Internationally, research on family mediation has developed screening instruments for intimate partner violence because some cases are unsuitable for joint sessions (Rossi et al., 2022, 2024). The safety gate of the second stage converges with this practice, while grounding it in *maqāṣid* and the prohibition of keeping a marriage to cause harm. Couple and therapy research likewise shows that emotion regulation difficulties shape conflict styles and satisfaction, and that practitioners working with high-conflict couples must regulate their own emotions (Bülbül et al., 2024; Yıldızhan et al., 2024), which supports the proportional, not exclusive, role that the model gives to psychological processes. Attention to children's psychological needs after divorce also confirms the place of children's interests in the fourth and sixth stages (Santoso & Sari, 2024).

Three Dimensions of Successful Resolution

Taken as a whole, the Wasathi-Maqāṣidi model distinguishes three dimensions of successful resolution: the quality of the process, the justice of the outcome, and the sustained protection of rights. The quality of the process covers safe communication and the opportunity to express views voluntarily; the justice of the outcome covers normative legitimacy, the fulfilment of rights, and the consideration of welfare; and the sustained protection of rights concerns the implementation of the decision and the prevention of further harm. The model extends the orientation of mediation described by Karmawan (2020) and the integrative approach found by Wirdyaningsih et al. (2026) by making protection and the evaluation of decisions explicit components. Figure 3 relates the three analytical tools to these three dimensions.

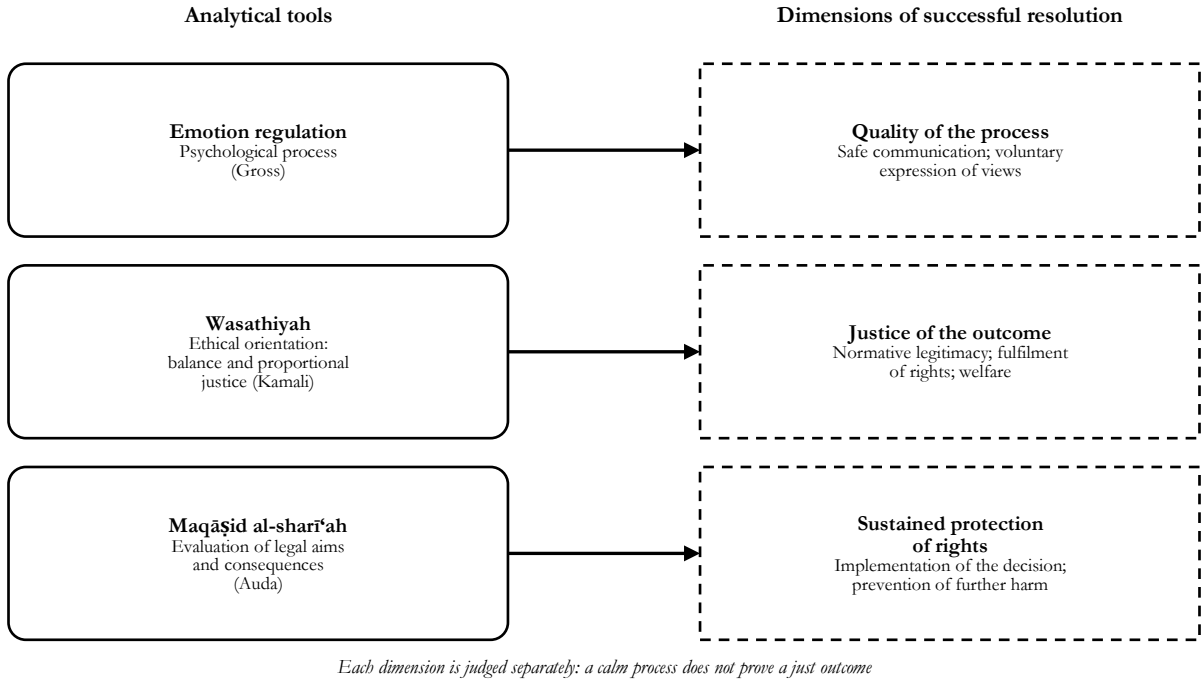


Figure 3. Analytical tools and the three dimensions of successful resolution

Source: Authors' synthesis (2026).

Figure 3 shows that emotion regulation, wasathiyah, and *maqāṣid* each contribute mainly to a different dimension. Emotion regulation supports the quality of the process, wasathiyah guides the proportionality and fairness of the decision, and *maqāṣid* evaluate whether the outcome protects welfare and rights over time. The dashed boundary reminds the reader that the three dimensions are judged separately: a calm process does not prove a just outcome, and a just agreement on paper does not prove that rights are fulfilled. This contribution remains a conceptual proposal that requires further comparison with earlier models and empirical testing of its usefulness in practice (Karmawan, 2020; Wirdyaningsih et al., 2026).

Implications and Limitations

Theoretically, the study places wasathiyah as an evaluative principle in marital conflict resolution; methodologically, it brings normative legal analysis together with psychological explanation without erasing the character of either discipline. Practically, the model offers mediators, judges, and family counsellors a sequence of questions on conflict type, safety, communication, rights, and follow-up, which can be used within existing mediation rules and institutional authority (Butt & Lindsey, 2018). Because the study is a library review, the model is conceptual and cannot be declared effective in practice. Its argument depends on selected literature, the search procedure still needs to be documented by the authors, and the operational meaning of terms such as "indication of threat" will require professional instruments and legal guidance before use.

E. Conclusion

This study shows that marital conflict resolution in Islamic Family Law is not merely reconciling husband and wife or preserving the marriage, but a multidimensional process involving normative, psychological, moral, and social considerations. Its main conclusions are: (1) under wasathiyah and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, a moderate resolution is oriented towards substantive justice, a balance of rights and obligations, human dignity, and the prevention of harm, so that wasathiyah means proportional justice rather than unlimited compromise and success depends also on safety, freedom of decision, and the protection of the rights of husband, wife, and children; (2) emotion regulation, wasathiyah, and *maqāṣid* have different but complementary functions, so that emotional control does not by itself resolve injustice, and a peaceful agreement is not beneficial if it preserves rights violations, unequal relations, or danger; (3) the conceptual contribution is the six-stage Wasathi-Maqāṣidi Marital Conflict Resolution Model, from identifying the character of the conflict and examining safety and rights, through emotion management and normative-maqāṣidi evaluation, to a decision based on proportional justice and the evaluation of the sustained fulfilment of rights; and (4) its novelty lies in placing safety and the protection of rights as preconditions before reconciliation is considered, and in distinguishing process quality, outcome justice, and sustained rights protection. Because the model is conceptual, further research should validate it with experts in Islamic Family Law, family psychology, and mediation, and test it empirically in mediation institutions and religious courts.

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Author Contributions

Hannilfi Yusra: conceptualization, methodology, and writing (original draft). Sri Deswati: investigation and writing (original draft). Alfi Rahmi: formal analysis of the emotion regulation literature and writing (review and editing). Januar: validation and writing (review and editing). Faizin: data curation of normative and fiqh sources and writing (review and editing). Azhar: visualization and writing (review and editing). Humaira Ahmad: writing (review and editing). All authors contributed to the writing of the article and have read and approved the final manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was not required because this study is a library-based integrative review that did not involve human participants or personal data.

Data Availability Statement

All sources analysed in this study are published works listed in the references. No new data were generated.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation of this work, the authors used Claude (Anthropic) and Grammarly to improve the structure and language of the manuscript. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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