

Fatherlessness and Children's Rights: A Case Study from Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency

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Abstract

The phenomenon of fatherlessness, or the absence of a father in a child's life, is increasingly common in society, whether due to death, divorce, or factors of residence or domicile. This study aims to analyze the impact of fatherlessness on the fulfillment of children's rights from an Islamic family law perspective, with a case study in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with a field study method through in-depth interviews conducted with three children affected by fatherlessness and statements from their respective mothers, usually the absence of a father has a significant impact on the emotional, psychological, social conditions and rights of children. The results of the study indicate that in one case the absence of a father has a significant impact on the emotional, psychological, and social conditions of the child. In one case, the right to material support is fulfilled because the father works in Malaysia, but the right to affection and direct care is not fulfilled, resulting in symptoms of emotional instability and social envy. In another case, the father is not only emotionally absent but also neglects to provide support, resulting in a complete violation of children's rights according to Islamic family law. The perspective of *fiqh munakahat* emphasizes that the father has obligations to provide support, care (*hadhanah*), protection, and education for children. When these obligations are not fulfilled, children's rights are neglected, both physically and spiritually. This research concludes that the phenomenon of fatherlessness is not simply a social issue, but rather a legal and sharia-compliant issue that has serious implications for the protection of children's rights.

Keywords: Fatherlessness, Children's Rights, Islamic Family Law, Livelihood, Hadhanah

Introduction

In the Islamic worldview, the family constitutes the primary and most fundamental institution for shaping a child's personality and character. Within the family, each member assumes roles that are normatively and theologically prescribed. In the framework of Islamic family law, the father is not merely a biological figure but serves as the *qawwam* (family leader), the provider of financial maintenance (*nafaqah*), protector, educator, and moral role model. When these responsibilities are not properly fulfilled, the balance of the family structure is disrupted, with children becoming the most vulnerable to its adverse consequences. This condition is commonly referred to in contemporary scholarship as fatherlessness.

The term *fatherlessness* refers to the absence of a father in a child's life, whether physically, emotionally, or functionally. In the Indonesian context, this phenomenon

has become increasingly significant due to the rising rates of divorce and labor migration abroad. An empirical study conducted by Rahmadani and Hidayat (2024) in the *Journal of Islamic Law and Family* demonstrates that paternal absence resulting from divorce affects not only children's economic well-being but also contributes to emotional developmental disorders and identity crises. Similarly, Maulana and Khairunnisa (2023), in the *Indonesian Journal of Child Protection*, found that children raised without an active paternal presence tend to experience higher levels of social anxiety than those growing up in intact families.

Within Islamic family law, children's rights (*huquq al-atfal*) extend far beyond the fulfillment of material needs. In Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the concept of *nafaqah* encompasses not only the provision of food, clothing, and shelter but also moral responsibility and educational guidance (*tarbiyah*). Arifin (2025), in his study published in *Al-Ahwal: Journal of Islamic Family Law*, argues that a father's neglect of his caregiving responsibilities constitutes a violation of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*), particularly the preservation of progeny (*hifz al-nasl*) and the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*). Consequently, fatherlessness should be understood not merely as a social problem but also as a normative issue with significant legal and moral implications.

This phenomenon is also evident in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency. Based on preliminary observations and field interviews conducted in February 2026, several cases were identified in which children experienced paternal absence due to two dominant factors: overseas labor migration and divorce followed by paternal neglect. These circumstances created complex challenges. Some children continued to receive financial support while being deprived of affection and parental guidance, whereas others received neither financial maintenance nor emotional care.

Research by Fauziyah and Darmawan (2024) in the *Journal of Gender and Child Studies* reveals that children experiencing fatherlessness often express their sense of loss through emotional instability, social withdrawal, or even denial of their paternal identity. These findings correspond with the field data collected in Bandar Baru District, where several children demonstrated feelings of social envy, suppressed anger, and symbolic expressions such as considering their fathers to be "non-existent," despite the fact that they were biologically alive.

From a normative legal perspective, Articles 80 and 105 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam*—KHI) explicitly stipulate that fathers remain legally obligated to provide financial support and bear responsibility for their children's education even after divorce. However, these legal provisions are not consistently implemented in social practice, revealing a substantial gap between normative legal standards and empirical realities. According to Zulkarnain (2023), writing in the *Journal of Sharia Law and Judiciary*, limited legal awareness and weak

social supervision are among the principal factors contributing to the inadequate fulfillment of children's rights following parental divorce.

Furthermore, from the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the father's role possesses an irreplaceable protective function. His absence not only creates an emotional void but also affects the development of children's character, their sense of security, and the authority structure within the family. Children's rights to affection (*mahabbah*), protection (*himayah*), and education (*tarbiyah*) constitute integral components of paternal obligations that cannot be substituted solely through financial support. When these rights are neglected, a substantive violation of the principle of justice within the family has occurred.

The principal informants in this study consisted of three children experiencing fatherlessness in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency: ZF from Kayee Jatoe Village, N from Paru Keude Village, and F from Kayee Jatoe Village. These participants were purposively selected because they represented different forms of paternal absence, ranging from partial to complete fatherlessness. ZF experienced partial fatherlessness, as his father continued to provide financial support while working overseas but was emotionally absent. In contrast, N and F experienced complete fatherlessness, characterized by the absence of both economic support and emotional involvement following divorce and paternal neglect.

Bandar Baru District was selected as the research site based on empirical evidence indicating an increasing number of families affected by labor migration and divorce, both of which have had significant consequences for children's well-being. Moreover, the district reflects the characteristics of rural Acehnese society, where religious values remain deeply embedded while communities simultaneously confront contemporary socioeconomic challenges. Accordingly, this study examines fatherlessness not merely as a family-related issue but also as a broader social reality with important legal implications from the perspective of Islamic family law.

Against this background, this study is both timely and necessary. Rather than focusing exclusively on the psychological consequences experienced by children, it analyzes the impact of fatherlessness on the fulfillment of children's rights through the lens of Islamic family law. The case study of Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency, was selected because it represents a concrete grassroots manifestation of the phenomenon while providing empirical insights into the interaction between Islamic legal norms and the social realities of local communities.

Employing a qualitative field research approach, this study seeks to address the following research questions: How does fatherlessness affect the fulfillment of children's rights in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency? and How is fatherlessness understood from the perspective of Islamic family law? By addressing these questions, this research aims to contribute to the advancement of Islamic family law scholarship while also serving as a moral reflection for society that a father's

responsibilities do not end with divorce or geographical separation. Children require not only financial support but also their father's presence, affection, guidance, and exemplary conduct, all of which play a fundamental role in shaping their future.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a field research design. The qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of fatherlessness in children's lives, particularly regarding how this condition affects the fulfillment of children's rights from the perspective of Islamic family law. According to Sugiyono (2022), qualitative research is designed to explore social phenomena comprehensively by describing the actual conditions experienced by research participants. Likewise, Creswell (2018) argues that qualitative research emphasizes the subjective meanings individuals attach to their lived experiences through direct interaction in the field, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Accordingly, this approach was considered the most appropriate for exploring the subjective experiences of children, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone.

The research was conducted in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency, with particular emphasis on two villages: Kayee Jatoe Village and Paru Keude Village. The selection of these sites was based on preliminary observations indicating the presence of several cases of children experiencing paternal absence due either to parental divorce or to fathers working abroad for extended periods. Furthermore, these villages provide a representative setting for examining how the principles of Islamic family law are practiced within rural communities where religious values remain deeply embedded while simultaneously confronting contemporary socioeconomic challenges.

The research participants consisted of three children experiencing fatherlessness—ZF, N, and F—each representing different family backgrounds. ZF experienced partial fatherlessness, as his father was employed overseas but continued to provide financial support. In contrast, N and F experienced complete fatherlessness as a consequence of parental divorce accompanied by paternal neglect of both financial and parental responsibilities. To enhance the credibility and comprehensiveness of the data, the biological mothers of each participant were also included as supporting informants, thereby enabling data triangulation through the comparison of perspectives from both children and their mothers.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were employed to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the children's emotional experiences, social interactions, and everyday living conditions while maintaining sufficient flexibility to pursue emerging themes.

Observation was conducted to examine the children's daily behavior, particularly their social interactions and emotional expressions in natural settings. Documentation was used to record interview transcripts and collect supporting materials relevant to the research objectives (Wijaya et al., 2025).

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction stage, information relevant to the research objectives was selected, categorized, and systematically organized to facilitate interpretation. The reduced data were subsequently presented in the form of descriptive narratives, after which conclusions were drawn by integrating the empirical findings with the theoretical framework of Islamic family law and the principles of *maqasid al-shari'ah*.

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, the study employed both source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the children with that provided by their respective mothers, whereas methodological triangulation involved integrating findings from interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. Through these procedures, the study sought to enhance the validity and reliability of the data and to provide an accurate representation of the empirical realities observed in the field.

Result and Discussion

This study was conducted through field interviews on 22–23 February 2026 in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency, focusing on Kayee Jatoe Village and Paru Keude Village. The data were collected through direct interviews with children experiencing fatherlessness, supplemented by information obtained from their respective mothers. The study sought to examine how paternal absence—whether resulting from labor migration, divorce, or neglect of parental responsibilities—affects the fulfillment of children's rights from the perspective of Islamic family law.

The findings reveal that paternal absence significantly affects three fundamental dimensions of children's rights: the right to financial maintenance (*nafaqah*), the right to affection and parental care, and the right to protection and psychological development. The phenomenon of fatherlessness extends beyond economic deprivation, producing profound psychological, social, and identity-related consequences for children who grow up without the presence of a father.

1. The Impact of Fatherlessness on Children's Rights

The field findings indicate that the effects of fatherlessness vary according to the degree of paternal involvement and the extent to which financial support is provided. A clear distinction emerged between partial fatherlessness and total fatherlessness.

a. Case of ZF (Kayee Jatoe Village)

ZF, a sixth-grade elementary school student, experienced partial fatherlessness because his father had been working in Malaysia since ZF was two years old. His father consistently provided financial support for the family, ensuring that the child's basic needs—including food, clothing, and educational expenses—were adequately met. Economically, the family did not experience significant hardship.

Nevertheless, the psychological and emotional consequences were substantial. ZF frequently expressed longing for his father, often asking about his whereabouts and comparing his own experiences with those of his classmates. He admitted feeling envious when his friends were picked up or accompanied to school by their fathers or when fathers attended important occasions such as birthdays and school events. According to ZF's mother, her son had once refused to attend school because he felt deeply saddened and isolated after witnessing his classmates enjoying the companionship of their fathers.

These findings demonstrate that the fulfillment of children's rights cannot be measured solely by the provision of material support. Within the framework of Islamic family law, a father is expected not only to provide *nafaqah* but also to serve as a source of affection, parental care, and moral guidance. In ZF's case, the prolonged absence of his father created an emotional void that could not be fully compensated for by his mother's dedicated care. Consequently, children experiencing partial fatherlessness face considerable challenges in developing a secure personal identity, psychological well-being, and healthy social competencies.

b. Case of N (Paru Keude Village)

The case of N illustrates total fatherlessness, in which the child lost both the financial and emotional involvement of his father. N, a fifth-grade elementary school student, had lived without paternal involvement since his parents divorced when he was in the first grade. His father neither provided financial support nor maintained any emotional relationship with him.

The psychological impact was particularly evident in N's statement: "*I do not have a father; my father has died.*" This expression does not reflect biological reality but rather represents a psychological defense mechanism developed in response to profound emotional trauma. Forced to confront the complete absence of a father who should have provided protection, affection, and guidance, N attempted to cope by symbolically denying his father's existence. Children experiencing total fatherlessness often suffer from a diminished sense of security, rejection of the paternal figure, and difficulties in establishing healthy emotional attachments.

From a social perspective, N exhibited withdrawal from peer interactions. He frequently compared himself with classmates from intact families, leading to feelings of inferiority and social exclusion. Furthermore, the absence of a paternal role model made him particularly vulnerable to internal conflicts during the process of identity

formation, as he lacked a male figure who could provide moral guidance and legitimate authority.

From the standpoint of Islamic family law, a father's failure to fulfill his obligations of financial maintenance, caregiving, and emotional support constitutes a serious violation of children's rights. Islamic law imposes upon fathers a comprehensive responsibility to safeguard the welfare of their children through financial provision, moral education, parental care, and psychological protection. The experience of N clearly demonstrates that total fatherlessness produces significantly more severe emotional consequences than partial fatherlessness, since every dimension of paternal involvement is absent.

c. Case of F (Kayee Jatoe Village)

F, a first-year junior high school student, was born and raised without ever knowing his father. His mother assumed sole responsibility for meeting all of his material needs, while his father remained absent both financially and emotionally.

The consequences of this condition were reflected in F's emotional instability. He frequently experienced anxiety, displayed irritability, and encountered difficulties adapting to peer relationships. Furthermore, he struggled to develop self-confidence because he lacked a paternal figure who could serve as a moral and social role model. In terms of character development, paternal absence negatively affected his understanding of discipline, responsibility, and legitimate authority. Like many children who grow up without fathers, F lacked a positive male role model through whom he could learn moral values, resilience, and appropriate patterns of social interaction.

Islamic family law emphasizes that a father's responsibilities encompass not only financial provision but also caregiving, moral guidance, and psychological protection. In cases of total fatherlessness resulting from divorce and paternal neglect, the long-term consequences include an impaired sense of security, difficulties in social adjustment, and the absence of a healthy male authority figure essential for children's personal development.

An analysis of these three cases demonstrates that the impact of fatherlessness extends across several interrelated dimensions.

a. Psychological and Emotional Dimension

The children experienced profound emotional deprivation, characterized by anger, emotional detachment, and feelings of envy toward peers whose fathers remained actively involved in their lives. These emotional wounds contributed to psychological instability that may persist into adulthood. Many participants also experienced difficulty expressing their emotions in healthy ways and occasionally avoided social situations that reminded them of their fathers' absence.

b. Social Dimension

Socially, the children tended to withdraw from interpersonal interactions, exhibited low self-esteem, and continuously compared themselves with peers from intact families. The absence of a paternal authority figure limited their ability to establish healthy interpersonal relationships and weakened their social confidence.

c. Identity and Moral Development

Paternal absence also disrupted the development of personal identity, particularly regarding children's understanding of the father's role as protector, guide, and moral authority. As a result, the participants experienced uncertainty in defining paternal roles, which negatively affected their sense of security, self-confidence, and understanding of social norms.

From the perspective of Islamic family law, these findings indicate a failure to fulfill paternal obligations relating not only to *nafaqah* but also to *hadanah* (parental care and upbringing). The emotional void experienced by children deprived of a father's presence cannot be fully compensated for by mothers or other family members. Consequently, paternal absence directly undermines children's psychological well-being and character development.

The study identified two distinct patterns of fatherlessness:

1. Partial fatherlessness, in which children's material needs are adequately fulfilled, but emotional involvement and parental care are absent, as illustrated by the case of ZF.
2. Total fatherlessness, in which neither financial support nor emotional involvement is provided, as demonstrated by the cases of N and F.

These findings underscore that fatherlessness is not merely an economic issue but a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing psychological well-being, social functioning, and identity formation. Children deprived of a paternal figure are more likely to experience emotional emptiness, identity confusion, and a diminished sense of security within social environments where most of their peers continue to live with actively involved fathers.

Fatherlessness from the Perspective of Islamic Family Law

Within Islamic family law, the father occupies a central position as the *qawwam* (guardian and leader) of the family, bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance, protection, and overall welfare of its members. This role extends beyond structural authority to encompass profound moral and spiritual obligations. A father is not only required to provide financial maintenance (*nafaqah*) but is also obligated to nurture his children through affection, education, and exemplary moral conduct. Wahbah al-Zuhayli (2011) emphasizes that paternal responsibilities encompass both material and spiritual dimensions, enabling the family to function as the child's first and most fundamental educational institution.

Furthermore, from the perspective of *fiqh al-munakahat* (Islamic family jurisprudence), a father's obligations toward his children include the provision of financial support, protection, education, and moral development. Abdul Rahman Ghazaly (2019) explains that *nafaqah* in Islam should not be narrowly understood as merely fulfilling basic necessities such as food and clothing; rather, it also encompasses educational expenses and all developmental needs essential for the child's holistic growth. Consequently, if a father fulfills only his financial obligations while remaining emotionally absent, his responsibilities cannot be regarded as fully discharged according to the principles of Islamic law.

More broadly, Muhammad Abu Zahrah (2014) argues that the family constitutes the primary institution for the formation of society in Islam. Accordingly, the failure of any family member to fulfill his or her prescribed role—particularly the father—has direct implications for the quality of future generations. This perspective demonstrates that fatherlessness is not merely an individual or familial concern but also a broader social issue with long-term consequences for the moral sustainability of society.

From the standpoint of Indonesia's *Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam [KHI])*, paternal responsibilities remain legally binding even after divorce. Articles 80 and 105 of the KHI explicitly stipulate that fathers continue to bear responsibility for providing financial maintenance and ensuring the care and education of their children. These provisions affirm that, under Indonesia's Islamic family law, a father's obligations do not cease simply because the marital relationship has been dissolved (KHI, 1991).

Viewed through the lens of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, Al-Shatibi (2022) explains that the primary objective of Islamic law is to promote human welfare by safeguarding the five essential interests: religion (*hifz al-din*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), and property (*hifz al-mal*). In the context of fatherlessness, paternal absence threatens several of these objectives, particularly the preservation of life (*hifz al-nafs*) and the preservation of lineage (*hifz al-nasl*). Children who grow up without an active paternal figure are at greater risk of emotional instability, identity crises, and deficiencies in moral character formation.

Similarly, Abdullah Nasih Ulwan (2007) asserts that child education in Islam is fundamentally the responsibility of both parents, with the father assuming the primary leadership role within the family. This educational responsibility encompasses the balanced cultivation of faith, moral character, physical well-being, intellectual development, and social competence from an early age. When the father is absent from this developmental process, a significant gap emerges in the child's character formation that cannot be entirely compensated for by the mother alone.

Yusuf al-Qaradawi (2010) further argues that harmony within the family constitutes the foundation of a healthy society. The absence of one of the family's

principal actors – particularly the father – creates psychological and social imbalance in children. This perspective reinforces the understanding that fatherlessness is not merely an individual problem but also a structural challenge affecting the integrity of the Islamic family system.

In practice, children experiencing fatherlessness lose far more than financial support; they are also deprived of a protector, mentor, and moral role model. In Islam, the father's presence is not merely biological but represents a fundamental element in fostering children's psychological stability and social development. This view is consistent with Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2004), who emphasizes that children should be nurtured with balanced affection, attentive care, and disciplined guidance in order to develop into individuals possessing strong faith, sound character, and moral integrity.

The experiences of ZF, N, and F clearly demonstrate that children's rights in Islam are holistic in nature. The fulfillment of these rights extends beyond material provision to include affection, parental care, protection, and moral education. Both partial and total fatherlessness were found to disrupt children's emotional well-being, social adjustment, and identity formation. These findings reaffirm that the paternal role cannot be fully substituted by other family members, regardless of their commitment and care.

In conclusion, from the perspective of Islamic family law, fatherlessness represents a fundamental imbalance in the fulfillment of children's rights. A father's failure to discharge his essential responsibilities not only undermines children's psychological and moral development but also has broader implications for the quality and resilience of future generations. Therefore, Islamic family law regards paternal involvement as a comprehensive obligation encompassing financial, emotional, educational, and moral dimensions, all of which are indispensable for safeguarding the best interests of the child.

Fatherlessness and the Fulfillment of Children's Right to Financial Maintenance (*Nafaqah*)

a. Case of ZF (Kayee Jatoe Village)

ZF, a sixth-grade elementary school student, experienced partial fatherlessness. His father had been working in Malaysia since ZF was two years old and consistently provided financial support for the family. Consequently, ZF's basic needs – including food, clothing, and educational expenses – were adequately fulfilled. However, despite the fulfillment of his material needs, ZF exhibited a profound emotional longing for his father.

ZF frequently asked about his father's whereabouts and expressed feelings of envy when observing classmates being picked up or accompanied to school by their fathers. His mother reported that he once refused to attend school after witnessing his friends enjoying their fathers' presence. This case demonstrates that the provision of

financial maintenance alone does not automatically ensure the fulfillment of children's rights to parental care and affection. The prolonged absence of a father creates a significant emotional void that cannot be compensated solely through material provision.

From the perspective of Islamic family law, fathers are obligated not only to provide *nafaqah* but also to fulfill their responsibilities in *hadanah* (parental care and upbringing) and emotional nurturing. The case of partial fatherlessness illustrates that financial support alone is insufficient; children's well-being also depends upon the father's physical presence and emotional engagement. These findings are consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, whereby the fulfillment of physiological and safety needs represents only one dimension of human development, while the need for love, belonging, and emotional attachment remains equally indispensable.

b. Case of N (Paru Keude Village)

N, a fifth-grade elementary school student, experienced total fatherlessness following his parents' divorce when he was in the first grade. Since the divorce, his father neither provided financial maintenance nor maintained any emotional relationship with him. Initially, N repeatedly asked about his father's whereabouts. Over time, however, he began expressing his disappointment by stating, "*I do not have a father; my father has died.*" This statement should not be interpreted as a factual assertion but rather as a psychological defense mechanism developed in response to profound emotional trauma.

The consequences of paternal neglect were evident in N's diminished psychological security, low self-esteem, and persistent feelings of exclusion. Total fatherlessness produced deep emotional wounds that significantly affected his identity development. From the perspective of Islamic family law, a father's failure to fulfill both financial and caregiving responsibilities constitutes a serious violation of children's rights. This case reaffirms that paternal obligations extend far beyond material support to include guidance, protection, emotional care, and active parental involvement.

c. Case of F (Kayee Jatoe Village)

F, a first-year junior high school student, grew up without ever knowing his father. His mother assumed sole responsibility for meeting all of his needs, while his father provided neither financial support nor emotional care. The consequences were reflected in F's emotional instability, difficulties in social adjustment, and inability to develop a healthy understanding of male authority as an essential component of character formation.

Total fatherlessness resulting from divorce and paternal neglect created long-term consequences, including an impaired sense of security, identity confusion, and the absence of a positive moral role model. Within Islamic family law, fathers are responsible not only for financial maintenance but also for guiding, protecting, and

instilling moral values in their children. The case of F demonstrates that failure to fulfill these religious obligations adversely affects children's psychological well-being and character development.

2. Psychological and Social Impacts of Fatherlessness

The findings indicate that fatherlessness extends beyond economic deprivation, profoundly affecting children's psychological well-being, social functioning, and identity formation. Across the three cases, several recurring patterns emerged.

a. Emotional Dimension

The participants commonly experienced emotional instability characterized by anger, anxiety, loneliness, and feelings of envy toward peers whose fathers remained actively involved in their lives. The absence of a paternal figure deprived them of a secure emotional foundation where they could express their feelings and receive guidance, thereby increasing their vulnerability to long-term psychological distress.

b. Social Dimension

Socially, the children tended to withdraw from interpersonal interactions, demonstrated low self-confidence, and encountered difficulties in establishing healthy relationships with peers. Growing up in fatherless households contributed to persistent feelings of inferiority and encouraged continual social comparison with children from intact families.

c. Identity Dimension

The participants also demonstrated disturbances in identity formation, including symbolic rejection or denial of the paternal figure. These experiences negatively influenced their sense of security, self-confidence, and understanding of legitimate authority. Consequently, many experienced uncertainty regarding gender roles and authority figures, particularly in relation to the father's function as a moral guide and disciplinarian.

These findings are consistent with John Bowlby's Attachment Theory, which emphasizes the critical importance of secure emotional attachment to primary caregivers for healthy psychological development. The cases of N and F, representing total fatherlessness, illustrate how the complete absence of paternal attachment can produce profound emotional trauma with lasting effects on children's psychological well-being and social behavior throughout adulthood.

3. Fatherlessness and Children's Rights from the Perspective of Islamic Family Law

Islamic family law assigns fathers four principal responsibilities:

a. Provider of financial maintenance (*nafaqah*), ensuring that children's essential material needs are adequately fulfilled.

b. Protector, responsible for safeguarding children's physical, psychological, and social well-being.

c. Educator and mentor, entrusted with cultivating moral values, discipline, and righteous character (*akhlaq*).

d. Authority figure and role model, serving as the primary reference for children's behavioral, moral, and identity development.

The case of partial fatherlessness, represented by ZF, demonstrates that financial provision without emotional presence is insufficient to fulfill these obligations comprehensively. Conversely, the cases of N and F illustrate that total fatherlessness reflects a complete failure to discharge the father's religious and legal responsibilities, thereby undermining children's overall welfare.

From the perspective of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, children's welfare encompasses several fundamental objectives.

First, the preservation of life (*hifz al-nafs*), as fatherlessness undermines children's emotional security and psychological stability.

Second, the preservation of lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), since paternal absence obstructs children's moral development and character formation.

Third, the preservation of intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), because children deprived of paternal guidance receive limited support in developing decision-making abilities, problem-solving skills, and socially appropriate values.

Accordingly, the phenomenon of fatherlessness reflects the incomplete implementation of Islamic family law in contemporary social practice. Children require a father's comprehensive presence—not merely as a financial provider, but also as a source of affection, moral guidance, psychological security, and ethical leadership.

4. Comparative Analysis of Partial and Total Fatherlessness

The study identified two distinct forms of fatherlessness.

Partial fatherlessness is characterized by the fulfillment of material needs despite the absence of emotional involvement. Although financial support is maintained, children continue to experience loneliness, emotional deprivation, and unmet needs for parental affection, as illustrated by the case of ZF.

Total fatherlessness, by contrast, is characterized by the absence of both financial maintenance and emotional engagement. This condition produces substantially more severe consequences, including deep emotional trauma, denial of paternal identity, psychological insecurity, and impaired social functioning, as demonstrated in the cases of N and F.

The findings suggest that total fatherlessness generates more complex developmental challenges because children lack a paternal figure capable of providing moral guidance, behavioral modeling, emotional protection, and legitimate authority. Consequently, they are more likely to experience identity confusion, diminished self-confidence, and limited social competence.

Implications for Children's Education and Socialization

The consequences of fatherlessness extend beyond the family environment and significantly influence children's educational experiences and socialization processes. Children deprived of an active paternal presence commonly encounter difficulties in:

1. adapting to peer relationships;
2. regulating their emotions and behavior within the school environment; and
3. developing self-confidence when facing academic and social challenges.

Within the framework of Islamic family law, fathers bear primary responsibility for guiding children toward balanced emotional, social, intellectual, and moral development. Their absence substantially diminishes children's opportunities to internalize values such as discipline, responsibility, integrity, and exemplary moral conduct through direct parental modeling. Consequently, fatherlessness not only affects children's immediate well-being but also has enduring implications for their personal development and their capacity to become morally responsible members of society.

Conclusion

The findings of this study conducted in Bandar Baru District, Pidie Jaya Regency, demonstrate that fatherlessness has a profound impact on the fulfillment of children's rights, affecting not only their material well-being but also their emotional, social, and identity development. The case of ZF, representing partial fatherlessness, indicates that although the child's economic needs were adequately fulfilled, the absence of paternal emotional involvement resulted in significant emotional deprivation. In contrast, the cases of N and F, representing total fatherlessness, reveal more severe consequences, including deep psychological trauma, diminished self-confidence, identity disturbances, and difficulties in social adjustment.

From the perspective of Islamic family law and *maqasid al-shari'ah*, these findings underscore that the fulfillment of a father's obligation cannot be limited to the provision of *nafaqah* (financial maintenance). Children are equally entitled to affection, parental care (*hadanah*), moral guidance, psychological protection, and the active presence of their father as a role model in their personal development. Consequently, fatherlessness represents not only a failure to fulfill children's material rights but also a neglect of their holistic rights as recognized in Islamic law.

Therefore, addressing the phenomenon of fatherlessness requires a collaborative and integrated approach involving families, educational institutions, and the wider community. Such cooperation is essential to ensure the comprehensive fulfillment of children's rights and to support their emotional, social, moral, and psychological development in accordance with the principles of Islamic family law.

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