
The *Nganyari Nikah* Tradition as a Form of Social Adaptation: Reactualizing Marital Bonds in Migrant Workers' Families in Margorejo, Kendal, Indonesia

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Article Received 10 December 2025, Revised: 8 July 2026, Accepted: 25 July 2026

Abstrak

Migrasi tenaga kerja telah mentransformasi dinamika keluarga di banyak komunitas perdesaan, sekaligus menciptakan tantangan sosial yang memerlukan mekanisme adaptif demi menjaga resiliensi keluarga dan stabilitas sosial. Di Indonesia, salah satu mekanisme tersebut tecermin dalam tradisi *Nganyari Nikah*, sebuah praktik pembaruan ikatan pernikahan yang terus dipertahankan di kalangan beberapa keluarga pekerja migran. Meskipun tradisi ini telah banyak dikaji dari perspektif hukum normatif Islam, fungsinya sebagai mekanisme adaptasi sosial masih kurang mendapatkan perhatian akademis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor sosial, budaya, dan keagamaan yang melatari kemunculan serta keberlanjutan tradisi *Nganyari Nikah*, memeriksa implementasinya di kalangan keluarga pekerja migran, dan mengeksplorasi pola-pola adaptasi sosial melalui Teori Adaptasi Sosial Talcott Parsons. Penelitian ini menerapkan desain kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan sosiologis di Desa Margorejo, Kecamatan Cepiring, Kabupaten Kendal, Indonesia. Data dihimpun dari 13 informan yang dipilih secara *purposive*, terdiri atas enam pasang suami-istri pekerja migran (12 orang) dan satu orang *Lebe* (petugas keagamaan desa), melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dokumentasi, dan studi kepustakaan. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keberlanjutan tradisi *Nganyari Nikah* dibentuk oleh praktik migrasi tenaga kerja, interpretasi lokal terhadap deklarasi *taklik talak* (janji

talak bersyarat), serta peran strategis *Lebe* dan komunitas lokal dalam menjaga keteraturan sosial. Analisis ini mengidentifikasi empat pola adaptasi sosial yang berbeda: adaptasi restoratif, adaptasi preventif, adaptasi proaktif, dan adaptasi rekonsiliatif. Temuan ini mengusulkan sebuah kerangka empat tipologi adaptasi sosial yang dibangun dari Teori Adaptasi Sosial Talcott Parsons, sebagai kerangka analisis awal untuk memahami bagaimana tradisi lokal berfungsi sebagai mekanisme adaptif guna memperkuat resiliensi keluarga dan stabilitas sosial dalam komunitas pekerja migran.

Kata Kunci: *Nganyari Nikah, Adaptasi Sosial, Resiliensi Keluarga, Pekerja Migran, Talcott Parsons.*

Abstract

Labor migration has transformed family dynamics in many rural communities, creating social challenges that require adaptive mechanisms to maintain family resilience and social stability. In Indonesia, one such mechanism is reflected in the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition, a practice of renewing marital bonds that continues to be maintained among some migrant workers' families. Although this tradition has been widely examined from the perspective of Islamic normative law, its function as a mechanism of social adaptation has received limited scholarly attention. This study aims to analyze the social, cultural, and religious factors underlying the emergence and continuity of the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition, examine its implementation among migrant workers' families, and explore patterns of social adaptation through Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory. This study employed a descriptive qualitative design with a sociological approach in Margorejo Village, Cepiring District, Kendal Regency, Indonesia. Data were collected from 13 purposively selected informants, comprising six migrant worker couples (12 individuals) and one *Lebe* (village religious official), through in-depth interviews, observation, documentation, and literature review. The collected data were then analyzed using qualitative methods. The findings indicate that the continuity of the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition is shaped by labor migration practices, local interpretations of *taklik talak* (conditional divorce pledge), and the strategic role of the *Lebe* and the local community in maintaining social order. The analysis identifies four distinct patterns of social adaptation: restorative adaptation, preventive adaptation, proactive adaptation, and reconciliative adaptation. Building on Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory, these findings propose a fourfold typology of social adaptation as a preliminary analytical framework for understanding how local traditions function as adaptive mechanisms to strengthen family resilience and social stability within migrant worker communities.

Keywords: *Nganyari Nikah, Social Adaptation, Family Resilience, Migrant Workers, Talcott Parsons.*

Introduction

Traditions are sustained through values and beliefs that are collectively constructed and continuously reproduced within a community (Geertz, 1973). Their continuity depends on the extent to which they are perceived as socially meaningful and morally legitimate by

community members (Asad, 1993). Within traditional and religious communities in Indonesia, family structures and marital bonds often undergo significant socio-religious negotiations when confronted with external pressures such as economic shifts and labor migration (Hugo, 2002; Sarah & Yumitro, 2024).

Across various regions in Java, local legal and cultural traditions are frequently mobilized to address marital tensions arising from prolonged physical separation (Sapariman, 2022). One prominent yet under-researched manifestation of this phenomenon is the practice of *nganyari nikah* (marriage renewal), which functions as a localized socio-religious response to the complexities of modern transnational and domestic migration (Ma'mun, 2016; Yunita, 2023). Although numerous scholarly works have examined marriage renewal through normative Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and customary law (*'urf*) (Mufid, 2019; Bahri, 2019), limited attention has been given to how these practices operate as comprehensive social adaptation mechanisms within family systems experiencing structural transformation (Scarpa, 2024).

Drawing from Talcott Parsons' (1951, 1971) structural-functionalist framework and theories of cultural embeddedness (Bourdieu, 1977; Sewell, 1992), this study investigates the socio-cultural, religious, and adaptive dimensions of the *nganyari nikah* tradition in Margorejo Village, Kendal, Central Java. By integrating classic sociological perspectives with contemporary insights on family resilience (Walsh, 2016) and transnational households (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Baldassar & Merla, 2014), this research aims to unpack the diverse ways in which migrant-worker families utilize local religious traditions to preserve relational stability, secure social integration, and navigate systemic disruption.

Research Method

1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a sociological approach to explore how the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition functions as a mechanism of social adaptation among migrant-worker families in Margorejo Village, Cepiring District, Kendal Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, interpretations, and social interactions within their natural socio-cultural setting. Guided by Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory, the study sought to explain how local communities reconstruct marital relationships and maintain family

stability following prolonged separation due to labor migration. Rather than evaluating the legal validity of *Nganyari Nikah*, this research focused on its adaptive social functions as practiced and interpreted by the community.

2. Research Objects and Data Sources

The object of this study was the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition as a socio-religious practice embedded within the community of Margorejo Village. Participants consisted of 13 informants, including six married couples (12 individuals) who had performed *Nganyari Nikah* after experiencing prolonged marital separation due to overseas labor migration and one *Lebe*, the local religious official responsible for conducting the ritual. In addition to these 13 purposively sampled informants, two further village residents were consulted informally as supplementary sources of background information on the community's migration history; as their involvement was incidental rather than part of the purposive sampling design, they are not counted among the study's primary informants.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on two inclusion criteria: (1) they had direct experience with the implementation of *Nganyari Nikah* following labor migration, and (2) they possessed sufficient knowledge regarding the practice and its socio-religious meaning within the local community. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved, indicated by the absence of substantially new information emerging from subsequent interviews.

Primary data were obtained from interviews, field observations, and documentation related to the implementation of *Nganyari Nikah*. Secondary data consisted of scholarly literature on family sociology, migration, marital relationships, local traditions, and Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory, as well as village records and community archives that provided historical and contextual information regarding the continuity of the tradition.

3. Research Procedure

The research was conducted through seven sequential stages. First, relevant literature concerning labor migration, family sociology, Islamic family traditions, and Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory was systematically reviewed to establish the conceptual framework and formulate the research questions. Second, participants meeting the inclusion criteria were identified through purposive sampling. Third, field observations were conducted to understand the social setting and implementation of the *Nganyari Nikah*

tradition. Fourth, semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with all participants. Fifth, documentary materials and village archives were collected to complement the interview findings. Sixth, all qualitative data were organized, transcribed, verified, and coded for analysis. Finally, the empirical findings were interpreted through Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory to identify patterns of social adaptation emerging from the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition.

Table 1. Research Procedure

No.	Stage	Description
1	Research Problem Identification	Identifying the research problem concerning the adaptive function of <i>Nganyari Nikah</i> among migrant-worker families.
2	Literature Review	Reviewing literature on migration, family sociology, Islamic family traditions, and Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory.
3	Participant Selection	Selecting participants through purposive sampling based on predefined inclusion criteria.
4	Data Collection	Conducting interviews, observations, and collecting documentary evidence.
5	Data Preparation	Transcribing, organizing, and verifying qualitative data.
6	Data Analysis	Coding, categorizing, and interpreting the data using descriptive qualitative analysis.
7	Interpretation and Reporting	Developing an analytical explanation of social adaptation patterns based on Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory.

4. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews, systematic field observations, documentation, and literature review. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 13 participants and lasted approximately 40–90 minutes. Interviews took place at locations agreed upon by the participants, including their homes, the *Lebe's* residence, and the village hall. With participants' informed consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and supplemented with field notes to ensure data accuracy and completeness.

The researchers had no institutional affiliation with the village administration or local religious institutions responsible for implementing the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition, thereby maintaining research independence. To enhance the credibility of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing interview data with field observations, documentary evidence, and relevant literature.

5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis through an interpretive sociological approach. The analytical process followed three interconnected stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During data reduction, interview transcripts, field observations, and documentary materials were coded and categorized to identify recurring themes concerning marital relationships, family resilience, and adaptive responses to prolonged migration.

The interpretation of the findings was guided by Talcott Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory, which explains how individuals and social groups maintain equilibrium when confronted with structural changes. Through iterative analysis, four recurring patterns of social adaptation were identified: restorative adaptation, preventive adaptation, proactive adaptation, and reconciliative adaptation. These four patterns constitute the principal analytical typology used to interpret how *Nganyari Nikah* functions as a culturally embedded mechanism for reconstructing marital relationships, strengthening family resilience, and maintaining social stability within migrant-worker communities.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation and repeated comparison of interview, observation, and documentary data were conducted throughout the analytical process until interpretative consistency was achieved.

Research Finding

Socio-Cultural and Religious Background of Nganyari Nikah in Margorejo, Kendal, Indonesia

Although *nganyari nikah* is practiced among Javanese Muslim communities under various local names, the motivations underlying its implementation differ across regions. In several communities, the tradition is performed in response to prolonged marital conflict, infertility, or recurring economic difficulties. In contrast, the emergence of *nganyari nikah* in Margorejo is closely associated with the community's long-standing experience of

overseas labor migration. Field findings indicate that approximately nine percent of the village population is registered as overseas migrant workers, with destination countries ranging from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea to Japan and Saudi Arabia (S. Mahendra, personal communication, July 1, 2025). This migration phenomenon is not a recent development: it has taken place since the early 1990s, initially undertaken by the first generation of parents and grandparents and now continuing into the third generation, forming an intergenerational practice that contributes to the structural characteristics of Margorejo Village (J. Juriyah, personal communication, July 1, 2025).

The prevalence of labor migration has resulted in prolonged physical separation between husbands and wives, creating new concerns regarding the continuity of marital relationships. Based on classical and contemporary religious interpretations, separation exceeding two consecutive years without the fulfillment of certain marital responsibilities is associated with the conditions mentioned in the *taklik talak* declaration recited after the marriage contract. Therefore, prolonged migration is not perceived solely as an economic activity but also as a condition that may affect the moral and religious dimensions of family life.

According to Masrokhan, the current Lebe of Margorejo, concerns regarding the marital status of migrant-worker families encouraged local religious figures and *kyai kampung* to discuss an appropriate communal response. These discussions resulted in the continuation of *nganyari nikah* as a practice performed when migrant-worker couples return after a prolonged period of separation. The practice is understood by the community as a way to reaffirm marital commitment and strengthen the relationship between husband and wife after a long absence (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 2, 2025; Sapariman, 2022).

The continuity of *nganyari nikah* is maintained not only through religious considerations but also through community expectations and social interactions. Families returning from overseas employment are commonly advised by the Lebe to perform the ritual, while relatives and neighbors contribute to reinforcing this practice through communal involvement (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 1, 2025). Consequently, *nganyari nikah* has become embedded within local social norms and is reproduced as part of the community's collective understanding of appropriate marital conduct.

The practice also reflects the community's effort to negotiate between religious interpretation and state marriage regulations. According to Indonesian marriage law, a marriage remains legally valid unless it is terminated through death, divorce, or a court decision. However, the local interpretation of the *taklik talak* declaration considers prolonged separation accompanied by the absence of marital obligations as a condition requiring religious reaffirmation of the marital relationship. Since a new marriage contract cannot be formally registered through the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) without a prior legal divorce, the community performs *nganyari nikah* as a symbolic reaffirmation of the existing marriage rather than as a replacement for the original marital contract (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 2, 2025).

Although there are no official written records identifying the exact beginning of *nganyari nikah* in Margorejo, oral accounts indicate that the practice emerged alongside the growth of overseas labor migration in the early 1990s. This period also coincided with the implementation of regulations concerning the formulation of the *sighat taklik talak* (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 1, 2025). The current Lebe did not initiate the tradition but continues to maintain and facilitate a practice that has become integrated into the religious and social life of the community (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 2, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate that the continuity of *nganyari nikah* in Margorejo is shaped by the interaction of three main factors: the social reality of overseas labor migration, local religious interpretations regarding marital obligations, and the role of community institutions in maintaining shared norms. These factors collectively contribute to the persistence of *nganyari nikah* as a socially meaningful practice within migrant-worker families in Margorejo Village.

The Practice of the Nganyari Nikah Tradition in the Margorejo Community, Kendal, Indonesia

The *nganyari nikah* tradition has become an established socio-religious practice within the Margorejo community and is primarily performed by married couples who have experienced prolonged physical separation due to overseas labor migration. Based on the findings, the practice is commonly conducted when couples have been separated for more than two consecutive years. According to local religious understanding, such prolonged separation may relate to the conditions mentioned in the *taklik talak* declaration, particularly

regarding the fulfillment of marital obligations. Although this condition does not automatically terminate the marriage according to Indonesian state law, the community considers *nganyari nikah* an important practice for reaffirming the marital relationship after the couple reunites (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 2, 2025).

The implementation of *nganyari nikah* generally follows the essential elements of an Islamic marriage ceremony while incorporating several local cultural practices. Before conducting the ceremony, couples consult the Lebe to receive guidance regarding the procedure, preparation, and appropriate time for implementation (R. Rosidah, personal communication, July 4, 2025; L & S. K, personal communication, July 4, 2025).

One important stage identified from the findings is the determination of an auspicious day (*dino apik*). The selection of the ceremony date is usually conducted through consultation with the Lebe, parents, or a *wong pinter*, a respected community member with knowledge of the Javanese calendrical system. The ceremonies documented in this study were conducted on several days considered favorable by the community, including Minggu Pahing, Rabu Pon, Jumat Pon, Jumat Wage, Kamis Pon, and Selasa Legi. Participants explained that choosing an auspicious day reflects their belief that the timing of the ceremony may contribute to blessings, harmony, and future family well-being (M. W & T. N, personal communication, July 3, 2025).

Another essential component of the ceremony is the appointment of a marriage guardian (*wali*). Similar to an Islamic marriage ceremony, the presence of a *wali* is considered necessary for qualitative validity within the community's religious understanding. The findings show that the implementation of *wali* follows flexible arrangements according to family circumstances. When the bride's father is available, he generally performs the role of *wali* (R. Rosidah, personal communication, July 4, 2025; L & S. K, personal communication, July 4, 2025). However, when the father has passed away, is elderly, or is unable to perform the role, another eligible family member or the Lebe may assume the responsibility with family approval (S & K, personal communication, July 5, 2025).

After the appointment of the *wali*, the ceremony continues with the presence of two witnesses, the recitation of *ijab qabul*, and the presentation of *mahar*. Although *nganyari nikah* does not constitute a new legal marriage under Indonesian marriage law, the *mahar* remains an important symbolic element representing the reaffirmation of marital

commitment. The findings indicate that the amount of *mahar* generally ranges between IDR 50,000 and IDR 100,000, depending on the husband's financial capacity (Masrokhan, personal communication, July 2, 2025).

The findings demonstrate that the practice of *nganyari nikah* combines Islamic marital elements with local cultural traditions. While religious requirements such as *wali*, witnesses, *ijab qabul*, and *mahar* remain central components, local customs such as selecting an auspicious day continue to influence the implementation of the ceremony. This combination illustrates the interaction between Islamic values and Javanese cultural traditions within the religious life of the Margorejo community.

Patterns of Social Adaptation in *Nganyari Nikah*

1. Restorative Adaptation

Restorative adaptation refers to the process through which families reconstruct relational stability after experiencing disruption caused by prolonged migration. In this study, the concept describes how migrant-worker families reaffirm marital commitment when physical separation has altered patterns of interaction, the distribution of marital roles, and the fulfillment of family responsibilities. From Parsons' (1951, 1971) structural-functional perspective, adaptation involves the capacity of a social system to respond to disruption while maintaining continuity and functional integration.

This pattern was identified in the experiences of couples MW–TN and AS–M, who experienced prolonged separation due to overseas labor migration while maintaining relatively stable marital relationships. MW and TN married in 2003, and TN departed for Malaysia as a migrant worker in 2007. During this period, communication between the spouses remained relatively consistent, and TN continued to provide financial support through regular remittances, which enabled the couple to build a house in 2013. However, physical separation limited the fulfillment of direct marital interactions and conjugal responsibilities. TN returned in 2017. Upon her return, the Lebe approached the couple and, interpreting their circumstances within the local religious framework as related to the conditions mentioned in the *taklik talak* declaration, advised the couple to perform *nganyari nikah* as a symbolic reaffirmation of their marital relationship. The ceremony was held on Minggu Pahing (Sunday Pahing), an auspicious day determined according to local custom; MW offered a *mahar* of one hundred thousand rupiah, the role of *wali* was delegated

to the Lebe due to TN's father's advanced age, and two neighbors served as witnesses (M. W & T. N, personal communication, July 3, 2025).

A similar pattern was found in the experience of AS–M. AS and M married in 2008, and M left for Taiwan later that same year. Due to harsh working conditions and restricted communication imposed by her employer, M could only contact AS about once a month and did not send remittances, as AS's income was sufficient to manage household needs. Although their separation period was shorter, approximately four years, migration affected their marital interaction through limited communication and reduced opportunities for direct emotional exchange. M returned home in 2012, and two days after her return, the couple consulted the Lebe regarding the implications of their prolonged separation and subsequently performed *nganyari nikah*. The ceremony was held on Rabu Pon (Wednesday Pon), based on the auspicious day calculated by a wong pinter; the mahar was fifty thousand rupiah, M's father served as the marriage guardian, and two close relatives acted as witnesses (A. S & M, personal communication, July 3, 2025).

These cases indicate that restorative adaptation does not emerge because the marital relationship has completely failed, but because migration-related structural changes create a need for relational reaffirmation. Through *nganyari nikah*, couples and the surrounding community symbolically reaffirm the continuity of the marital relationship and reconstruct a sense of relational balance. Furthermore, the involvement of the Lebe, family members, and witnesses demonstrates that the reaffirmation of marriage is understood as a collective social process supporting social integration (Parsons, 1951, 1971).

2. Preventive Adaptation

Preventive adaptation refers to adaptive efforts undertaken by families to anticipate potential disruptions before they develop into serious marital or social problems. Unlike restorative adaptation, preventive adaptation operates through early intervention aimed at preserving relational continuity (Parsons, 1951, 1971).

This pattern was identified in the experiences of couples L–SK and S–K, whose decision to perform *nganyari nikah* was primarily motivated by the desire to strengthen and protect their marital relationship rather than to repair an existing conflict (L & S. K, personal communication, July 4, 2025; S & K, personal communication, July 5, 2025). Through *nganyari nikah*, families symbolically address concerns related to prolonged separation,

changing marital roles, and uncertainty regarding future family conditions before these factors develop into more serious relational problems.

L and SK married in 2010 and had a son two years later; financial strain led L to work in South Korea in 2013, where he consistently sent remittances and maintained communication before returning in 2023 to reunite with his family and start a small business. Upon his return, the couple initially refused the Lebe's advice to perform *nganyari nikah*, believing it implied annulment of their original marriage, but agreed after the Lebe explained that their prolonged absence of conjugal relations constituted a breach of the *taklik talak* vow. The ceremony was held on Jumat Pon (Friday Pon), with SK's father serving as guardian, neighbors as witnesses, and a mahar of one hundred thousand rupiah (L & S. K, personal communication, July 4, 2025).

S and K married in 2017, and K departed for Taiwan in 2018. She experienced severe workplace pressure and emotional distress, particularly after recently giving birth, and returned home after only six months, before completing the two-year separation period typically associated with *taklik talak*. The couple nonetheless approached the Lebe to perform *nganyari nikah*, seeking spiritual blessing for their marriage in anticipation of future difficulties. The ceremony was held on Kamis Pon (Thursday Pon); because K's father had passed away and her brother lived outside the region, the wali appointment was conducted by phone with the Lebe acting as proxy, two extended family members served as witnesses, and the mahar was one hundred thousand rupiah (S & K, personal communication, July 5, 2025).

3. Proactive Adaptation

Proactive adaptation represents a deliberate and future-oriented strategy through which family systems mobilize cultural resources to enhance institutional resilience and prepare for long-term domestic milestones (Parsons, 1951, 1971). In Margorejo, this pattern manifests when returning migrant couples utilize *nganyari nikah* to accumulate spiritual, emotional, and social capital necessary for the permanent termination of their migration cycles, as observed in the case of couple H–UR. H and UR married in 2018 and migrated abroad the following year, H to Japan and UR to Hong Kong; they maintained communication but did not exchange remittances, each keeping individual savings. UR returned in 2022 and H followed in 2024. Soon after reuniting, the couple consulted the Lebe, acknowledging that they had not lived as husband and wife during the migration

period, and hoped that performing *nganyari nikah* would strengthen marital harmony, secure divine blessings, stabilize their economic circumstances, and facilitate conception. The ceremony was held on Jumat Wage (Friday Wage), with UR's father serving as guardian, relatives as witnesses, and a mahar of seventy-five thousand rupiah; shortly afterward, UR became pregnant and gave birth in early 2025 (H. Hermawan, personal communication, July 6, 2025).

4. Reconciliative Adaptation

Reconciliative adaptation occurs when prolonged migration has already caused visible disruptions to the emotional, communicative, and ethical boundaries of the marriage. When severe systemic tension such as eroded trust or deep-seated conflict threatens family equilibrium (Parsons, 1951, 1971), *nganyari nikah* is deployed as a formal mechanism for crisis resolution.

This critical pattern was observed in the narratives of couple R-DP, who experienced severe emotional distance and a breakdown of communication. R and DP married in 2016 and initially lived together in Margorejo before financial challenges led DP to migrate to Hong Kong in 2018 with R's consent. Communication and remittances remained consistent during the first year but declined markedly in the second, and R grew suspicious after acquaintances suggested DP was involved with another man abroad. After R demanded DP's return, the couple sought guidance from the Lebe; based on the *taklik talak* provisions concerning prolonged separation, the absence of conjugal relations, and the involvement of a third party, the Lebe advised the couple to perform *nganyari nikah* as a structured socio-religious space to repair relationships, grant mutual forgiveness, and rebuild conjugal trust.

The ceremony was held on Selasa Legi, with DP's uncle serving as guardian and two close friends of R as witnesses, and the mahar was fifty thousand rupiah (R. Rosidah, personal communication, July 7, 2025). The theoretical implications of these four adaptation patterns are elaborated further in the following Discussion section.

Discussion

Typology of Social Adaptation and Theoretical Implications

The four patterns of social adaptation identified in this study demonstrate that *nganyari nikah* functions as a culturally embedded mechanism through which migrant-

worker families respond to different forms and levels of disruption resulting from prolonged migration. These patterns restorative adaptation, preventive adaptation, proactive adaptation, and reconciliative adaptation should not be understood as isolated categories, but as interconnected adaptive orientations that emerge according to the condition of marital relationships, the nature of migration-related challenges, and the objectives pursued by families. Despite their differences, all four patterns share a common function: maintaining the continuity and social integration of the family system.

Viewed through Talcott Parsons' (1951, 1971) structural-functionalist framework, the findings illustrate how social systems respond to structural changes through culturally legitimate mechanisms that preserve continuity and integration. In the context of migrant-worker families, prolonged migration affects patterns of interaction, marital roles, emotional relationships, and the fulfillment of family responsibilities. Rather than allowing these changes to disrupt family organization, the Margorejo community develops and maintains *nganyari nikah* as a socially recognized practice through which marital relationships are reaffirmed and family bonds are reconstructed.

This typology offers a preliminary, exploratory contribution to Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory by suggesting that adaptation within family systems may operate through multiple culturally specific pathways rather than through a single process of adjustment (Scarpa, 2024); confirming the generalizability of this typology would require further studies across other migrant-family contexts. The findings suggest that local religious traditions can function as adaptive institutions that mediate between structural change and social continuity. In this case, *nganyari nikah* operates beyond its religious and customary dimensions by serving as a social mechanism through which migrant-worker families reconstruct relationships, strengthen family resilience, and maintain integration within the wider community.

Nganyari Nikah as a Social Adaptation Mechanism Beyond Normative and Customary Perspectives

Previous studies on *nganyari nikah* have predominantly examined the practice from normative perspectives, particularly through the lenses of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and customary law (*'urf*) (Mufid, 2019; Bahri, 2019). These studies have contributed significantly to clarifying the legal and religious validity of marriage renewal practices within Muslim societies. Furthermore, scholarly discussions on the intersection of Islamic

law and local culture consistently highlight how communities negotiate formal religious rules with everyday customary practices (Ilyas et al., 2024; Nasution & Nasution, 2021). However, such legalistic approaches often offer limited explanations for why traditions like nganyari nikah continue to be actively maintained and reproduced under rapidly shifting contemporary social conditions.

The field findings indicate that nganyari nikah in Margorejo cannot be understood merely as a mechanical, symbolic repetition of a marriage contract. Rather, it represents a culturally meaningful process through which families reconstruct destabilized relationships and foster social equilibrium, reflecting a dynamic dialog between law, morality, and social needs (Sodiqin, 2021). This empirical reality aligns closely with contemporary scholarship on transnational families, which highlights how global labor migration compels households to construct localized cultural strategies to cope with emotional and structural dislocations (Sarah & Yumitro, 2024).

This insight supports the broader sociological argument that religious practices do not operate in isolation from everyday social realities; instead, they function as dynamic institutions through which communities interpret, navigate, and manage structural social change. As Geertz (1973) famously argued, religious traditions provide complex systems of meaning that enable communities to organize ambiguous experiences and respond to existential uncertainty. Similarly, Asad (1993) emphasizes that Islamic practices must be critically examined within their specific historical and socio-structural contexts rather than understood solely as abstract theological expressions. In this sense, nganyari nikah demonstrates how living Islamic traditions are continuously negotiated, recontextualized, and operationalized within local social environments to resolve contemporary crises.

Furthermore, the socio-economic context of Margorejo clearly illustrates how international labor migration transforms agrarian family structures into transnational ones (Vertovec, 2009; Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Baldassar & Merla, 2014). Although overseas employment provides substantial economic mobility through remittances, it simultaneously introduces acute domestic challenges related to emotional intimacy, the realignment of marital roles, and the execution of everyday family obligations. Extant literature on transnational families has demonstrated that geographical dispersion does not inherently dissolve kinship ties; instead, it forces families to construct novel strategies to maintain

relational stability across borders (Carling & Pettersen, 2014) where tradition acts as an anchor for social integration.

Conclusion

This study reveals that the *Nganyari Nikah* tradition in Margorejo functions as a dynamic mechanism of social adaptation, enabling migrant-worker families to navigate the structural challenges of prolonged marital separation. The persistence of this tradition is rooted in the interplay between migration pressures, local interpretations of the *taklik talak* declaration, and the guiding role of the *Lebe*.

The research identifies four distinct patterns of social adaptation: restorative, preventive, proactive, and reconciliative. These patterns demonstrate that *Nganyari Nikah* is not a static ritual, but a flexible socio-religious tool used to restore marital equilibrium, preempt domestic instability, strengthen resilience, and rebuild trust. Theoretically, this study builds on Parsons' Social Adaptation Theory by proposing a multidimensional typology of family adaptation in the context of transnational migration. While the findings are anchored in the specific context of Margorejo, the proposed analytical framework offers a valuable perspective for family sociology and the anthropology of Islamic law. Future comparative research is recommended to test the applicability of this typology in broader migrant-family contexts.

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