

Inter State Marriage Trends and Their Relevance to Domestic Harmony: A Study in Sambas West Kalimantan

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Abstract

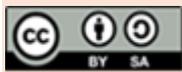
The phenomenon of inter-country marriage is one of the social trends that is growing rapidly in various border areas, including in Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, which borders Malaysia directly. This interstate marriage is not only about administrative and civic aspects, but also has implications for domestic life, especially in terms of harmony, religious values, and culture. This study aims to examine the trend of interstate marriage in the Sambas region and analyze its relevance to domestic harmony in the perspective of Islamic Family Law. This study uses a qualitative approach with field study methods, in-depth interviews, and documentation of transnational married couples, and local religious leaders. The results of the study show that the main motives for interstate marriage in Sambas include economic factors, the openness of border areas, and social and cultural relations that have been established for a long time. However, in practice, intercountry marriages often face serious challenges such as cultural differences, worship practices, maintenance obligations, and marriage legal status that is not always clear nationally or internationally. From the perspective of Islamic Family Law, domestic harmony is highly dependent on the principles of mawaddah, rahmah, and shared responsibility between husband and wife, which must be built on an understanding of religious values and a strong commitment. Therefore, legal regulation and the development of cross-border premarriage are urgently needed so that interstate marriage does not become a source of conflict, but rather strengthens family ties and Islamic values in the midst of globalization dynamics.

[Fenomena perkawinan antar negara menjadi salah satu tren sosial yang berkembang pesat di berbagai wilayah perbatasan, termasuk di Kabupaten Sambas, Kalimantan Barat, yang berbatasan langsung dengan Malaysia. Perkawinan antar negara ini tidak hanya menyangkut aspek administratif dan kewarganegaraan, tetapi juga membawa implikasi terhadap kehidupan rumah tangga, khususnya dalam hal keharmonisan, nilai-nilai agama, dan budaya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tren perkawinan antar negara di wilayah Sambas serta menganalisis relevansinya terhadap keharmonisan rumah tangga dalam perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi lapangan, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi terhadap pasangan suami istri lintas negara, dan tokoh agama setempat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motif utama terjadinya perkawinan antar negara di Sambas meliputi faktor ekonomi, keterbukaan wilayah perbatasan, serta hubungan sosial dan budaya yang telah terjalin sejak lama. Namun, dalam praktiknya, perkawinan antar negara

seringkali menghadapi tantangan serius seperti perbedaan budaya, praktik ibadah, kewajiban nafkah, serta status hukum perkawinan yang tidak selalu jelas secara nasional maupun internasional. Dalam perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam, keharmonisan rumah tangga sangat bergantung pada prinsip mawaddah, rahmah, dan tanggung jawab bersama antara suami dan istri, yang harus dibangun di atas kesepahaman nilai agama dan komitmen yang kuat. Oleh karena itu, regulasi hukum dan pembinaan pranikah lintas negara sangat dibutuhkan agar perkawinan antar negara tidak menjadi sumber konflik, tetapi justru memperkuat ikatan keluarga dan nilai-nilai keislaman di tengah dinamika globalisasi.]

Keywords: Interstate Marriage, Domestic Harmony, Islamic Family Law, Sambas, West Kalimantan.

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INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a social institution that has a central role in the formation and preservation of the social order. In the context of globalization and increasing mobility between countries, the phenomenon of *intermarriage* is becoming more and more real in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. West Kalimantan, especially Sambas Regency which is directly adjacent to Malaysia, is one of the regions that has experienced significant dynamics in the trend of inter-country marriage. This is due not only to geographical and historical factors, but also to the intense socio-cultural and economic interaction between the people on the Indonesia-Malaysia border.

The phenomenon of interstate marriage in Sambas not only reflects cross-border interaction, but also contains complexities in the dimensions of law, culture, religion, and domestic harmony. In many cases, marriages between Indonesian women (Indonesian citizens) and foreign (foreign citizens) men have become commonplace, both through legal and non-legal channels (Dewi and Syafitri, 2022). These marriages are often not only based on love or emotional connections, but are also caused by economic, social, and practical factors for mobility and employment in neighboring countries. However, behind this phenomenon, various issues arise that need to be studied in depth, one of which is how the impact of marriage between countries on domestic harmony.

Domestic harmony is an important element that determines the continuity and quality of relationships in a family. From the perspective of Islamic family law, domestic harmony includes aspects of mawaddah, rahmah, and sakinah that must be maintained by both parties (Syafliin Halim *et al.*, 2024). When marriage is carried out between two individuals with different national, cultural, and even religious backgrounds, of course the challenge in maintaining harmony is even greater. Communication problems, differences in cultural values, legal administrative challenges, and social dynamics are factors that affect the success and failure of the household as a result of interstate marriage (Karimullah, 2023).

Sambas as a border area has unique characteristics. The high mobility of its population to Malaysia makes the region very open to outside influences, including in terms of cross-border marriages. There are not a few cases where Indonesian women marry men from other countries without going through clear legal procedures (Lathifah, Ernawati and

Masduki, 2022). This raises various problems, such as the citizenship status of the child, inheritance rights, social security, and legal protection for wives and children born of the marriage. In fact, it is not uncommon for this kind of marriage to end in divorce or prolonged domestic conflict due to a lack of understanding of the law and harmonious household values.

In terms of regulations, Indonesia actually has various regulations that regulate mixed marriage or inter-country marriage. Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, as well as Government Regulation No. 9 of 1975 as its implementing regulation, provides guidelines on legal procedures and provisions for Indonesian citizens who want to marry foreign nationals (Muttaqin, 2024). However, in practice in the field, especially in border areas such as Sambas, the implementation of this regulation still encounters various obstacles, ranging from limited information, access to legal services, to differences in public understanding of the importance of marriage legality.

On the other hand, from the perspective of Islamic family law, marriage between countries is not prohibited as long as the conditions and pillars of marriage are fulfilled according to the provisions of sharia (Sofiana and Sunni, 2021). However, differences in culture, customs, and country of origin often raise problems in carrying out a harmonious domestic life. For example, in terms of the role of husband and wife, decision-making in the family, and how to educate children. These differences can become wealth if managed well, but they can also be a source of conflict if there is no understanding.

Islamic family law provides a comprehensive guide to the basic purpose and principles of marriage, which is to create calmness, affection, and mercy (*sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*). In the context of interstate marriage, these principles are tested through the different social and cultural realities between the spouses (Albab and Izzuddin, 2025). This study aims to analyze how cross-border couples in Sambas build and maintain their domestic harmony, as well as how the provisions of Islamic law are implemented or even experienced challenges in those realities. The study also examines the role of religious and community leaders in assisting interstate couples, providing a comprehensive picture of the social and legal implications of this trend on Muslim family institutions in border areas.

In this context, it is important to examine in depth how the trend of interstate marriage occurs in Sambas Regency and how it is relevant to domestic harmony from the perspective of Islamic family law. Does inter-country marriage in this region tend to create harmony, or does it present more complex challenges than inter-Indonesian marriage?

This research is important because it can contribute to understanding the socio-cultural and legal dynamics that occur in border areas, as well as provide input for policymakers in designing more inclusive regulations and legal protection services for citizens who enter into interstate marriages. In addition, this research also aims to provide understanding to the public about the importance of aspects of legality, harmony, and religious values in living a married life, especially in the context of cross-border marriage.

To strengthen this research, the following are relevant previous studies in the last five years, as follows: First, research by Naswar. (2024). "*The Status of Children in Mixed Marriages: State Obligations and Legal Protection*". *Journal of Litigation*, 25(2), 45-60. This study highlights legal problems related to the status of children in mixed marriages. This study shows that the absence of official registration of interstate marriages can be detrimental to children in aspects of inheritance and citizenship law. This research is relevant in the context of Sambas where many marriages are not recorded (Hasanuddin *et al.*, 2024).

The second research was by Dhea Marellia. (2022). "*Intercultural Communication in Married Couples of Different Countries*". *Journal of Frontier Social Humanities*, 9(2), 123-138. This article specifically examines the harmony of households between countries in border

areas. The author emphasizes the importance of communication and the role of religious leaders in maintaining household stability. The results showed that couples who followed cross-cultural premarital guidance were better able to maintain harmony (Marellia and Caropeboka, 2023).

Third, research by Defanti Putri Utami. (2021). *"Mixed Marriage in Indonesia Reviewed from Islamic Law and Positive Law"*. MASADIR: Journal of Islamic Law, 1(2), 89-105. This article discusses the differences and common points between Islamic law and national law in regulating marriage between countries. This research is an important theoretical basis to explain how the dualism of the legal system affects the legality and stability of households between countries (Utami and Ghifarani, 2021).

Fourth, research by Rondang Herlina. (2024). *"The Phenomenology of Interfaith Marriage and Its Implications for Domestic Harmony and Happiness"*. Al-Asta, 3(1), 33-50. This study explains that economic factors are the main drivers of interstate marriage in border areas. Many Indonesian women marry Malaysian men for better economic access, although often without emotional and legal readiness (Herlina, 2024).

Fifth, research by Padma D. Liman. (2021). *"Legal Protection of Mixed Marriage in Indonesia"*. Journal of Women and Law, 9(2), 111-126. This article highlights the weak legal protections for Indonesian women who marry foreigners without clear legality. Many of them have been victims of domestic violence or have lost their legal rights to children and property (D. Liman, 2021).

Although numerous studies have addressed interstate marriage, most have focused on the legal-formal aspects, population administration, or conflicts of legal jurisdiction, without in-depth examination of its implications for domestic harmony from an Islamic family law perspective. Previous research also rarely considers local context as a significant analytical variable. This study fills this gap by analyzing interstate marriage trends in Sambas, West Kalimantan, and their relevance to domestic harmony based on Islamic family law principles. The article's primary contribution lies in integrating Islamic normative analysis with the socio-cultural realities of the border region, thereby enriching the contextual discourse on Islamic family law.

Furthermore, this study also wants to see how the role of religious and customary institutions in directing the Sambas people to carry out interstate marriages. Do religious institutions such as the KUA (Office of Religious Affairs) and local religious leaders have a strategic role in providing premarital guidance and cross-border household assistance? And how do people view this phenomenon in the context of the local values that live in their midst? To answer these questions, this research takes a multidisciplinary approach involving the study of Islamic family law, national law, family sociology, and legal anthropology. Thus, it is hoped that it can provide a complete and comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of interstate marriage and its impact on household harmony in Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan.

METHOD

The study entitled *"Trends in Interstate Marriage and Its Relevance to Domestic Harmony from an Islamic Family Law Perspective: A Study in Sambas, West Kalimantan"* employs a qualitative research method with a sociological juridical approach. This methodological framework is designed to capture both the lived social realities and the normative legal dimensions of interstate marriage practices in border regions, particularly Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, which directly borders Malaysia.

The sociological approach is applied to examine social contexts and dynamics, including the motivating factors behind cross-border marriages and their implications for

household harmony. Concurrently, the juridical approach focuses on assessing the conformity of these marriage practices with Islamic family law principles and Indonesian national law. To strengthen the normative analysis, the juridical component draws upon primary legal materials, such as statutory regulations and official legal documents, secondary legal materials, including scholarly works, journal articles, and expert opinions; and tertiary legal materials, such as legal dictionaries and encyclopedias.

This study uses a qualitative approach with field study methods, in-depth interviews, and documentation of transnational married couples, and local religious leaders. The data were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relevance of interstate marriage trends to domestic harmony from an Islamic family law perspective.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Family Law and Interstate Marriage Trends

Islamic family law has a basic principle that governs marriage as a sacred bond and is based on the values of religion, equality, and cooperation. In the context of interstate marriage, there are several issues that must be considered, including differences in nationality, culture, and legal systems that apply in each country. This can affect the implementation of the rights and obligations of husband and wife and form a household dynamic that is different from marriage in one country.

One of the important aspects of Islamic family law related to interstate marriage is the issue of the legality of marriage (Darna, 2021). In Islam, the conditions for the validity of marriage include the presence of guardians, witnesses, and consent from the two bride and groom. In interstate marriages, administrative procedures become more complex, due to differences in regulations between countries (Bagenda *et al.*, 2024). In Indonesia, for example, marriages involving foreign nationals must be registered at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and adjusted to the provisions of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. Meanwhile, other countries have their own regulations that regulate marriage between countries.

Marriage between countries in Indonesia is generally regulated in Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, which was later strengthened by Law Number 16 of 2019 as an amendment to the Marriage Law (Sugitanata and Karimullah, 2023). In this provision, there is no explicit prohibition on marriage between citizens, as long as both parties meet the conditions of marriage according to the applicable law in Indonesia. Article 2 paragraph (1) states that marriage is valid if it is carried out according to the laws of each religion and its beliefs (BIP, 2017). For foreign citizens who want to marry an Indonesian citizen, they must also comply with the legal provisions in their respective countries, as affirmed in Article 56 of the Marriage Law, that marriages carried out abroad between two Indonesian citizens or between Indonesian citizens and foreigners are valid if they are carried out according to the laws of the country where the marriage takes place, and do not violate public order according to Indonesian law (Arianto, 2023).

In the context of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) which is the legal guideline for Muslims in Indonesia, marriage between countries is still possible as long as it does not conflict with sharia principles. Article 4 of the KHI states that in order to be able to carry out a marriage, there must be a future husband and a future wife, each of whom is Muslim, so that in the context of marriage between countries, one of the main requirements is religious similarity (Shofiyulloh and Rufaida, 2024). If one of the parties is a non-Muslim, then there must be a process of converting to Islam first before the marriage takes place. KHI also regulates the provisions of marriage guardians, witnesses, and records, all of

which must be fulfilled even if one of the spouses is from another country (Wardana, 2024). Articles 40 and 44 of the KHI also prohibit marriages that are considered religiously invalid, such as marriages with non-Muslim women, women in the iddah period, or marriages without the permission of the guardian (Kementerian Agama RI, 2018).

Interstate marriages performed by Muslims must also meet the administrative requirements determined by the state through the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), including citizenship documents, unmarried certificates, and legalization from relevant agencies (Jamal, Makka and Rahmatillah, 2022). This procedure aims to ensure that the marriage is legal religiously and stately, as well as to avoid legal problems in the future, such as related to the citizenship of children, inheritance rights, and the legal status of the spouse. Thus, both the Marriage Law and the KHI provide a legal basis that allows marriage between countries, but still with strict conditions to be in accordance with religious principles and national legal order.

In addition, cultural differences are also a significant factor in the sustainability of the household. Domestic harmony can be affected by differences in habits, social norms, and different outlooks on life between couples who come from different cultural backgrounds (Sarkowi *et al.*, 2022). In this context, Islamic family law provides guidelines for building a harmonious household with the principles of mutual understanding, affection, and cooperation between husband and wife.

Sambas is one of the regions in West Kalimantan that has a strategic geographical position because it is directly adjacent to Malaysia. Its location in the border area makes this area a meeting point for various cultures, languages, and traditions from two different countries. This cross-border interaction occurs not only in the context of trade and labor mobility, but also in the realm of people's social lives, including in marital relationships. This phenomenon causes the Sambas people to become accustomed to more pluralistic social dynamics and open to the influence of outside cultures.

The mobility of Sambas residents abroad, especially for work purposes, has been going on for a long time and has become an important part of the socio-economic dynamics of the local community. Many Sambas people work as plantation labourers, domestic workers, or in other informal sectors in various states of Malaysia, especially overseas which are geographically closest. In the process of living and working abroad, there is often intensive social interaction between Indonesian citizens and other countries which ultimately leads to personal relationships, even up to the level of marriage.

On the other hand, the cultural attraction and character of the Sambas people, who are known to be friendly, religious, and still uphold local customs, are one of the reasons why foreign citizens choose to establish relationships with local residents. The life of the Sambas people who maintain local wisdom but are also open to the outside world, creates a social space conducive to the growth of cross-border relations. Interstate marriage is not only a form of personal bond, but also a manifestation of increasingly complex socio-cultural integration in border areas (Suryatni, 2021).

However, the intensity of interstate marriage in Sambas also brings its own challenges, both in legal, social, and cultural aspects. Differences in the marriage legal system, issues of citizenship status, and differences in values and norms in building a household are often sources of conflict or disharmony in marriage. Therefore, understanding the social and cultural background of the Sambas people is important in formulating a relevant and contextual approach to Islamic family law in dealing with the phenomenon of inter-state marriage in this region.

Dynamics of Domestic Harmony in Interstate Marriage

Inter State Marriage Trends and Their Relevance to Domestic Harmony

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Domestic harmony is the main goal of every marriage, both domestically and between countries. In the context of interstate marriage, domestic harmony can be affected by a variety of factors, including differences in language, customs, and legal systems (Jumiati *et al.*, 2024). According to the view of Islamic family law, domestic harmony can be achieved if husband and wife understand and respect each other's differences, and are committed to maintaining a good relationship in accordance with Islamic principles (Hermanto and Nisa', 2024).

For example, in many interstate marriages in border areas such as Sambas, West Kalimantan, there are challenges related to language and cultural differences. Married couples from different countries may have difficulty communicating and understanding existing social norms. Therefore, it is important for the couple to understand and appreciate these differences, and strive to build good communication to maintain domestic harmony.

Table. Interstate Weddings in Sambas

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND GENDER					INFORMATION
Shenan and Welsi	Turki	Man	Sambas	Woman	
Mat and Zizi	Amerika	Man	Sambas	Woman	

Rehal Kalva and Masami Ueda	Sambas	Man	Jepang	Woman
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Data sources are processed based on documentation data from 2024-2025

Based on the couple data presented in the table, there is a clear trend of interstate marriages involving local residents of Sambas, West Kalimantan, and foreign nationals from diverse countries. For instance, the marriage between Shenan, a Turkish citizen, and Welsi, a woman from Sambas, illustrates cross-national union initiated by a foreign male partner. Similarly, the couple Mat Dan, an American citizen, and Zizi, a local woman from Sambas, reflects the same pattern. Conversely, the marriage of Rehal Kalva, a man from Sambas, to Masami Ueda, a Japanese citizen, demonstrates that interstate marriage also occurs with local men marrying foreign women.

These cases indicate the increasing intensity of cross-cultural and interstate interactions in marital relationships, particularly in border regions such as Sambas. Beyond uniting individuals from different national and cultural backgrounds, such marriages generate distinctive social, cultural, and legal dynamics that directly affect domestic harmony. To strengthen the scientific validity of this analysis, the table of interstate marriage data is based on purposively selected cases obtained through field interviews and local administrative records. The selection criteria include legal marital status, cross-national citizenship, and residency in Sambas Regency, ensuring the relevance and credibility of the data for international readers.

One of the main factors that encourages interstate marriage in border areas such as Sambas is the economic aspect. As an area that borders directly with Malaysia, many Sambas residents migrate to other countries, especially in the education sector (college), especially in plantations, construction, and households. They generally send money from their work to their hometowns to help families left behind. This cross-border economic activity not only strengthens financial relationships, but also opens up opportunities for more intense social interaction between Indonesians and Malaysians, thus enabling the formation of personal relationships that lead to marriage.

In addition, the cultural closeness between the Sambas and Malaysian people also plays an important role in encouraging interstate marriage. The similarity of languages, customs, and cognate value systems facilitates the process of communication and adaptation in interpersonal relationships (Datuk Imam Marzuki, 2024). On various occasions such as Islamic holiday celebrations, feasts, and other social and cultural activities, people from both sides of the border often visit and interact with each other. This repeated interaction opens up space for the emergence of mutual knowledge and

interest, thus increasing the possibility of the formation of marriage relations between countries.

Advances in communication technology have also contributed significantly to the increasing trend of cross-border marriages. Social media apps, instant messaging services, and video call platforms are becoming important means for individuals who live far away to get to know each other and foster relationships (Zis, Effendi and Roem, 2021). This technology overcomes the distance barrier that has been an obstacle in establishing a romantic relationship. In border areas such as Sambas, migrants abroad can continue to interact intensively with residents in Indonesia, both to strengthen family ties and establish new relationships that have the potential to lead to marriage.

Overall, economic, cultural, and technological factors form a social ecosystem that is conducive to inter-country marriage in Sambas. All three are interconnected and reinforce each other: the economy drives mobility, the culture builds proximity, and technology bridges communication. In this context, intermarriage is not only a personal phenomenon, but also part of a social dynamic that reflects the openness, adaptation, and integration of border communities to increasingly inclusive global change.

In addition, the legal aspect also affects household harmony. For example, in some cases, there are issues related to the citizenship status of children born of interstate marriages. In Islamic family law, children are considered as a trust whose rights must be protected. However, in interstate marriages, there may be differences in the recognition of the child's citizenship status, which can give rise to legal issues related to custody and the division of obligations between the parents.

Factors Affecting Domestic Harmony in Interstate Marriage

There are several factors that can affect household harmony in marriage between countries. One of the main factors is communication. Good communication between husband and wife is essential to overcome problems that arise due to differences in culture, language, and customs (Maesurah, 2021). In addition, economic factors also play an important role, because differences in economic status between couples can add to tensions in the household.

In addition, social and cultural factors are also very important in maintaining household harmony. Married couples must be able to adapt to each other's cultures to create a harmonious environment in the household (Widyasari and Suyanto, 2023). One of the big challenges is cultural integration that can affect family relationships, such as differences in child parenting, customs, and way of life.

Domestic harmony is the main goal of any marriage bond, both in domestic and international contexts. In Islam, marriage is not only seen as a contractual relationship between two individuals, but also as a means of attaining inner peace (*sakinah*), love (*mawaddah*), and *mercy* (Fatahillah and Hariyadi, 2024). Therefore, creating a harmonious home life is a shared responsibility of the couple, even more so in interstate marriages that are full of complex cultural, legal, and religious dynamics.

In the context of interstate marriage, domestic harmony can be influenced by two main types of factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are related to the personal and relational aspects of the couple, while external factors are related to the social, cultural, and legal environment that surrounds their lives (Muhammad Nur Syahbani, Jamil and Fatimah, 2023). These two factors affect each other and must be managed in a balanced manner so that households can survive in the long term.

One of the most important internal factors is the ability to communicate effectively between couples. In cross-border marriages, differences in language and cultural expressions can be an obstacle to building honest and open communication (Januar *et al.*,

2025). However, if couples are able to develop communication patterns that understand and respect each other, these differences can be a force that enriches their relationship. Islam itself strongly advocates deliberation and communication in the household as a form of affection and respect between husband and wife (Maciej Serda *et al.*, 2024).

In addition to communication, differences in values and beliefs are also significant internal factors. In interstate marriages, couples may have different religious backgrounds or even if they are both Muslims, they may have different religious views. Islamic family law considers it important to conform to the values of *aqidah* and worship as the basis of domestic harmony (Mazaya, Laeliyah and Hami, 2024). Therefore, understanding and mutual respect for each other's religious values are indispensable to prevent conflicts in domestic life.

On the other hand, extended family support also plays an important role as an external factor that affects household harmony. In many cases, the blessing and acceptance from the couple's family can be a source of emotional strength for husbands and wives in living life together. On the other hand, if the family does not accept cultural or religious differences from the couple, it can trigger psychological distress that negatively impacts their relationship (Majid, 2024). Islam strongly emphasizes the importance of friendship and harmony between families as part of maintaining the integrity of the household.

In addition to family support, the legal regulations of each party also affect the stability and legality of marriage between countries. In the context of Islamic family law, marriage must meet the conditions and pillars of marriage such as the existence of wali, dowry, *ijab-qabul*, and the absence of sharia obstacles (Malisi, 2022). If one of the parties is a foreign citizen, then national laws and regulations related to cross-border marriage must also be fulfilled so that the marital status is legal under state law and Islamic law.

Inconsistencies in legal proceedings or incompleteness of legal documents can have a serious impact on the rights of spouses and children in the household. For example, issues of citizenship status, marriage registration, inheritance rights, and child custody can become a worsening problem if not addressed from the beginning (Sholikhawati *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, a thorough understanding of each party's national legal system and the principles of Islamic family law is needed in designing a stable and harmonious home life.

Although the perspective of Islamic family law has been normatively introduced, it has not yet been fully positioned as the main analytical framework in assessing interstate marriages. This study therefore places core Islamic family law principles *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (affection), *rahmah* (compassion), family deliberation (*musyawarah*), and the reciprocal responsibilities of husband and wife as evaluative criteria to measure, rather than merely describe, the success or failure of domestic harmony in cross-border marriages.

Within this framework, domestic harmony is assessed by examining how spouses manage cultural, legal, and social differences through mutual respect, communication, and shared responsibility in accordance with Islamic norms. Taking these aspects into account, it can be concluded that harmony in interstate marriage is not solely determined by goodwill or emotional attachment, but by the couple's readiness to understand, negotiate, and responsibly manage existing differences. From an Islamic perspective, domestic harmony is not incidental it is a moral and spiritual achievement attained through joint effort, sustained mutual understanding, and adherence to Islamic family law values and applicable legal regulations.

The Relevance of Interstate Marriage to Domestic Harmony in Sambas, West Kalimantan

A study in Sambas, West Kalimantan shows that inter-country marriage has a significant impact on household harmony. The communities in these border areas have distinctive characteristics, where many couples are involved in interstate marriages, especially with Malaysian citizens. This is due to the geographical proximity and intense social interaction between Indonesians and Malaysians.

Although a significant number of interstate couples have been able to maintain domestic harmony, empirical findings indicate that others encounter substantial challenges. One of the most prominent difficulties arises from legal complexities caused by differences between the Indonesian legal system and those of other countries, particularly concerning marital property regimes, child custody arrangements, and the citizenship status of children. If these issues are not properly anticipated and managed, they may undermine household stability and harmony.

In this context, Islamic family law should not merely function as a source of normative reinforcement, but rather as a critical analytical instrument. Principles such as *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, the concept of *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* in regulating spousal relations and property management, and the principle of child protection can be employed as evaluative benchmarks to assess the degree of harmony achieved by each couple. From a *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* perspective, differences in religion within the household, for example, may be critically examined in relation to the objectives of safeguarding religion (*hifẓ al-dīn*) and lineage (*hifẓ al-nasl*). Likewise, the extent to which couples practice tolerance and mutual respect can be assessed based on their alignment with the overarching aims of Islamic law in preserving family welfare and long-term domestic harmony.

To obtain accurate research results related to the Relevance of Interstate Marriage to Domestic Harmony in Sambas, West Kalimantan, the following are the results of interviews with interstate couples

First, the Shenan Couple (from Turkey) and Welsi (from Sambas). Shenan and Welsi have been married for more than five years. According to Emi, cultural differences were initially a major challenge in their relationship. However, open communication and mutual respect for differences are the main keys in building household harmony. Welsi explained that her husband showed great interest in local culture, including learning Sambas Malay and understanding family customs. Shenan added that as a Muslim, he finds it easier to adjust to the environment of the Sambas community, which is also predominantly Muslim. "Islamic values help us to find common ground in household decision-making, including in educating children," he said. From this couple, it can be concluded that the equality of religious beliefs is an important foundation in maintaining stability and harmony in cross-border households. They also emphasized the importance of tolerance, patience, and adaptation to differences (Interview of the Shenan (Turkish) and Welsi (from Sambas) couples. April 1, 2025).

Second, the couple Mat Dan (from America) and Zizi (from Sambas). Mat Dan and Zizi are a unique couple due to cultural and religious differences. Mat Dan, an American citizen, converted to Islam before marrying Zizi. They said that the adaptation process was quite challenging, especially in terms of religious practices and lifestyle. Zizi revealed that she gave her husband time and space to understand the teachings of Islam slowly. "I don't force, but I invite gently and set an example," said Zizi. Mat Dan himself admitted that his decision to embrace Islam was purely from his faith after learning Islamic values.

Cultural differences, especially in terms of communication, parenting, and financial management, had sparked minor conflicts, but the couple was able to overcome them with

the principles of openness and discussion. "Our key is not to store problems. If there is something that is not suitable, we will talk about it," explained Mat Dan. This interview shows that the success of interstate marriages is greatly influenced by the readiness of the individual to accept differences, as well as clarity in the commitment to mutually agreed upon household values (Interview of Mat Dan (from America) and Zizi (from Sambas). April 8, 2025).

Third, the couple Rehal Kalva (from Sambas) and Masami Ueda (from Japan). The couple has been married for seven years. Rehal said that he knew Masami while working abroad, then decided to get married and settle in Sambas. Their biggest challenge comes from the Masami's adjustment to life in a more traditional and religious area. Masami said that she had to learn the language, culture, and also adjust to the habits of the extended family. "It was difficult at first, especially about food and a more communal way of life. But now I am used to it and even feel comfortable," he said. He also showed a high interest in family values in Islam, even though he had not yet embraced Islam.

Rehal explained that he did not force his wife to change his faith, but they lived a married life with mutual respect. Masami supports Rehal in carrying out worship and participating in community social activities even though they are different religions. The couple affirmed that tolerance and commitment to live together in love and understanding are the main pillars of their domestic harmony. Rehal said, "Although we are culturally and religiously different, our goal is the same: to build a peaceful and happy family" (Interview with Rehal Kalva (from Sambas) and Masami Ueda (from Japan). April 15, 2025).

The three couples interviewed showed that interstate marriage in Sambas is not only a social phenomenon that is increasingly common, but also a meeting place for complex cultural and religious values. Household harmony in a cross-country context seems to be largely determined by several important factors that they manage to demonstrate in everyday life. First, similarity or agreement in basic values, especially in the religious aspect, becomes the main foundation that binds and directs the dynamics of the household in a stable direction. Second, the ability of each couple to adapt and open themselves to the couple's culture is key in mitigating potential conflicts due to differences in backgrounds. Third, open communication and mutual respect for differences is an important means of building understanding and trust between couples.

In addition, the existence and role of extended families and local communities also have a significant influence in supporting the integration process of foreign couples into local social and cultural life. Finally, tolerance and willingness to compromise without losing one's personal identity become a force that unites differences into harmony. These findings show that although differences in countries of origin can be challenges in themselves, with shared commitments and values, international couples are still able to form harmonious, stable, and complementary households.

They stated that although there are some differences in the way they educate their children or view the role of husband and wife, they agree to always discuss every major decision. Harmony in their household is built on the basis of mutual learning and understanding. Based on a study in Sambas, West Kalimantan, it can be concluded that although interstate marriage can present challenges in terms of culture and law, with a good understanding between husband and wife, as well as a willingness to adapt to existing differences, domestic harmony can still be maintained. Islamic family law provides clear guidelines regarding the rights and obligations of husband and wife, as well as the protection of children, which is an important foundation in the development of Islamic family law. Based on the results of an interview with a religious leader and the Head of the Tebas District Religious Affairs Office (KUA), Mr. Marjoni, various in-depth views were

revealed regarding the trend of interstate marriage and its relevance to domestic harmony, especially in the Sambas area, West Kalimantan. According to him, the phenomenon of inter-country marriage in Sambas is something that cannot be avoided, considering the geographical position of this region which is directly adjacent to Malaysia, as well as the high mobility of its people. Many Sambas people work in Malaysia, and conversely, many foreign nationals come and settle in Sambas, either to work or build a new life. In this context, cross-border interaction often leads to marriage bonds between nations (Interview with Mr. Marjoni, a religious leader and Head of the Tebas District Religious Affairs Office (KUA). April 7, 2025).

Marjoni emphasized that in terms of Islamic law, marriage between countries is basically allowed as long as it meets the requirements and harmony of marriage, especially in terms of religious similarity. Islam does not restrict marriage based on nationality, but pays great attention to aspects of faith and responsibility in the household. In practice, KUA Tebas strongly emphasizes the process of verifying documents and the understanding of prospective couples regarding rights and obligations in marriage, including the ability to adjust to cultural differences and habits.

According to him, one of the biggest challenges in marriage between countries is the difference in cultural values, languages, and customs which, if not managed properly, can trigger conflicts in the household. Therefore, Marjoni stated that pre-marriage coaching is very important to provide sufficient understanding to cross-border couples about household dynamics and Islamic values in fostering families. In this case, KUA also actively encourages extended families from both parties to play a role in the process of adaptation and integration of couples, in order to create an environment that supports household harmony.

Furthermore, he emphasized that harmony in households between countries is highly dependent on good intentions, healthy communication, and understanding in carrying out family life. Marjoni said that couples who are able to maintain religious values, respect cultural differences, and build open communication tend to have more stable and harmonious households, regardless of their nationality differences.

In general, Marjoni views that the trend of interstate marriage is not something to worry about, as long as it is managed with a wise approach and based on strong religious values. He also hopes that the community and religious institutions will be more proactive in providing education and assistance to cross-border couples, in order to create a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* in the midst of diversity..

However, the challenges faced by couples in interstate marriages are also considerable, especially related to differences in nationality, different legal systems, and cultural integration. Therefore, it is important for governments to provide support in terms of regulations and policies that facilitate the process of administering marriages between countries, as well as provide fair legal protection for their spouses and children. Overall, interstate marriage in border areas such as Sambas, West Kalimantan, has a great impact on domestic harmony. With a good understanding of Islamic family law and a willingness to adapt to cultural differences, a household built in interstate marriage can run harmoniously and prosperously.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the trend of interstate marriage in the border area of Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan particularly between Indonesian and Malaysian citizens has emerged as a significant and continuing social phenomenon. This pattern of cross-border marriage is strongly influenced by geographical proximity, shared historical ties,

economic considerations, and cultural interactions between communities on both sides of the border. In practice, interstate marriage gives rise to complex legal, social, and religious implications, especially in relation to differences in legal systems, administrative procedures, citizenship status, and the legal status of children.

Overall, domestic harmony in interstate marriages in Sambas is largely determined by the couple's capacity to manage cultural diversity, legal pluralism, and administrative challenges, while simultaneously fulfilling the ethical and normative responsibilities prescribed in Islamic family law. From this perspective, harmony is closely linked to the balanced execution of spousal rights and obligations, mutual understanding in practicing religious values, and the realization of justice within family roles. Differences in nationality do not, in themselves, constitute the primary obstacle to household harmony, provided that Islamic values serve as the foundational framework for family life.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged as part of academic prudence. First, the geographical scope is confined to Sambas Regency, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other border regions. Second, the number of informants is relatively limited, focusing primarily on selected interstate couples and local religious authorities. Third, the analysis emphasizes the normative dimension of Islamic family law rather than a broader comparative assessment across multiple national legal systems. Recognizing these limitations not only demonstrates methodological caution but also opens avenues for future research, particularly comparative studies involving different border contexts and legal regimes.

However, there are also various challenges in realizing a harmonious household, such as the lack of understanding of the rights and obligations of the spouses in the laws of their respective countries, the lack of legal and social assistance from the government, and cultural gaps that can cause conflicts. Inconsistencies in the legal system between Indonesia and other countries, especially in the recognition and registration of marriages, often cause administrative problems that lead to unclear family and child legal status. From the perspective of Islamic law, interstate marriage remains valid as long as it meets the principles and conditions of marriage, and does not violate sharia provisions, such as the prohibition of marrying non-Muslims. Harmony in households between countries requires the strengthening of religious values, effective intercultural communication, and a clear legal protection system that is in favor of family rights. Thus, it can be concluded that interstate marriage in the Sambas region is an unavoidable social reality and has the potential to make a positive contribution to the lives of border communities, as long as it is supported by a strong religious understanding, responsive legal regulations, and adequate social support from the state. Synergistic efforts between the government, religious leaders, and the community are needed to create a fair and harmonious system for families between countries

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