

USIM's Legal Clinic and Divorce Casework: A Maqasid al-Shariah-Based Socio-Legal Study

Muhammad Nor Izzuddin NorizanNizan, Muhammad Anas Mohd Shaiful Nizam, Ahmad Iqbal
Alfaruq Rosli, Ahmad Irfan Assiddiq Rosli, Mohd Harifadilah Rosidi

Faculty of Shariah and Law, University Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The rising divorce rate has become a significant social and legal concern in contemporary Malaysian society, particularly among Muslim couples. In Islam, divorce (*talaq*) is a lawful but regulated dissolution of the marital bond, which may also occur through *fasakh* by court order or *khulu'* at the wife's request. Recent national statistics indicate a steady increase in divorce cases, commonly attributed to misunderstandings, financial hardship, and third-party interference. This study examines the role of USIM's Legal Clinic as a community-based legal advisory service that assists couples in addressing domestic conflicts by Syariah principles and the objectives of *Maqasid al-Shariah*. Using a qualitative approach, this paper analyses how the Clinic's services, including Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms such as mediation and sulh, facilitate the amicable resolution of disputes, alleviate the burden on the Syariah Court, and offer cost-effective solutions. Expanding E-Consultation services further enhances public access to personalised legal guidance and timely support. Additionally, this research explores the broader legal challenges couples face within the Syariah system, including claims for maintenance, child custody, and the division of matrimonial assets. By delivering accessible legal advice and dispute resolution support, the USIM Legal Clinic serves as an effective early intervention model that upholds core *Maqasid al-Shariah* objectives: preserving family harmony, protecting individual dignity (*hifz al-'ird*), and promoting justice and social welfare. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening such community-oriented institutions to address divorce-related issues comprehensively and to ensure that practical legal assistance aligns with the higher aims of Islamic law in contemporary Malaysia.

Keywords: Maqasid al-Shariah, Divorce, USIM Legal Clinic, Alternative Dispute Resolution, e-Consultation

INTRODUCTION

Divorce has become an increasingly prevalent social issue in contemporary society, particularly in Malaysia, where its rising frequency poses significant implications for family stability and community well-being. Under Islamic law, divorce (*talaq*) refers to the dissolution of the marital bond through a specific pronouncement by the husband. It can take various forms: *talaq* (repudiation by the husband), *fasakh* (judicial annulment granted by the court), or *khulu'* (a divorce initiated by the wife in exchange for compensation to the husband).

A recent study by the Pahang Shariah Judiciary Department (2025) underscores that while divorce is legally permissible in Islam, it is intended to be a measure of last resort, invoked only when all avenues for reconciliation have been exhausted. Despite its permissibility, divorce is strongly discouraged due to its potential to disrupt family cohesion and to have wider adverse effects on societal harmony. This principle is emphasised in a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who said:

أبغض الحلال إلى الله تعالى الطلاق

“The most detested of permissible things to Allah is divorce.”

(Narrated by Abu Dawud, al-Hakim)

This hadith highlights the Islamic perspective that, although allowed, divorce is to be avoided whenever possible to uphold the objectives of *Maqasid al-Shariah*, particularly the protection of family unity (*hifz al-nasl*) and the promotion of social stability.

In Malaysia, the incidence of divorce has risen markedly in recent years. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2025), there were 62,890 reported divorce cases in 2023, representing a 43.1% increase compared to the previous year. This upward trend is even more pronounced among the Muslim population, where the number of divorces rose by 45.8%, reaching 46,138 cases in 2023 compared to 31,650 in 2021. The most commonly cited reasons for marital dissolution include irreconcilable differences, financial difficulties, and the disruptive influence of third parties. Mohd Uzir (2025) notes that an external party within a marriage frequently catalyses separation. Moreover, as highlighted by Zaini and Zanariah (2023), such involvement may, in certain circumstances, constitute an offence under Syariah criminal law, further complicating legal proceedings and exacerbating familial distress.

Couples experiencing marital conflict in Malaysia frequently encounter various obstacles when attempting to resolve their disputes through the Syariah court system. The principal challenges are lengthy legal procedures, substantial costs, and procedural complexities. Before introducing mechanisms such as *hakam* (arbitration), it was estimated that more than 500 divorce cases remained unresolved each year, with some disputes extending for four to eight years before concluding (Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Malaysia, 2024).

Research by Luqman Hakim and Hasnizam Hashim (2024) of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) further confirms that the current Syariah legal framework requires continuous improvement to enhance efficiency and responsiveness. Their findings highlight the need for streamlined procedures to resolve marital disputes promptly and equitably, thereby minimising the emotional and financial burden on affected families.

In response to these challenges, USIM has established the USIM Legal Clinic under the Faculty of Shariah and Law as an institutional initiative to support couples facing marital difficulties. The clinic provides early-stage legal advice and counselling as a preventive step before formal litigation is pursued. This approach enables couples to conserve time and financial resources, maintain confidentiality, and explore amicable solutions. In addition to in-person services, the clinic offers free online consultations covering civil and Syariah legal matters, including advice on inheritance disputes, further broadening access to affordable and context-sensitive legal guidance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

USIM Legal Clinic: A Community-Centred Platform Anchored in Maqasid al-Shariah

Establishing legal clinics represents a progressive initiative that bridges theoretical knowledge with practical community engagement, ensuring that public legal needs are addressed consistently with Islamic law principles. At University Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), this vision is realised through the Legal Clinic under the Faculty of Shariah and Law (FSU), which functions as an accessible platform for the community to obtain free legal advice and early intervention support, in line with the higher objectives of *Maqasid al-Shariah*.

Aligned with USIM’s mission to integrate *Naqli* (revealed) and *Aqli* (rational) knowledge, the Legal Clinic provides supervised services where qualified academics and legal practitioners assist clients in resolving a wide range of Syariah and civil matters. These include family-related disputes such as marriage and divorce issues, inheritance claims, matrimonial property distribution, consumer rights matters, and minor civil disputes. By addressing such issues proactively, the clinic contributes to the protection of lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), the preservation of individual dignity (*hifz al-‘ird*), and the promotion of social harmony, reflecting the practical

application of *Maqasid al-Shariah* principles.

USIM's Legal Clinic has expanded its outreach through digital services in response to evolving societal needs and technological advancements. One is e-Consultation, an innovation that proved critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. This approach guarantees that legal assistance remains accessible, confidential, and free of charge, especially for financially disadvantaged groups such as the B40 community. By offering early guidance and promoting amicable dispute resolution, the clinic aligns with the *Maqasid al-Shariah* objective of preventing harm (*dar' al-mafasid*) and securing public welfare (*jalb al-masalih*).

More than just a centre for advice, the USIM Legal Clinic embodies the university's dedication to community service and societal well-being. Its holistic service model integrates direct support, conflict resolution through mediation, and broader awareness of legal rights and obligations. A thorough understanding of its operational impact and challenges is vital to strengthen its function as an instrument for upholding justice, protecting vulnerable groups, and realising the higher purposes of Islamic law in contemporary Malaysian society.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Resolving legal and interpersonal disputes does not rely exclusively on formal court proceedings, particularly in the current era of globalisation, where efficiency and accessibility are highly valued. In Malaysia, various alternative mechanisms have been adopted to provide more user-friendly and cost-effective pathways for conflict resolution. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is recognised globally, including in Malaysia, as an effective means to settle disputes outside conventional litigation processes.

Historically, the concept of ADR in Malaysia can be traced back to the early 1600s, when village heads (*penghulu*) played a pivotal role in mediating and resolving conflicts within their communities (Hadenan et al., 2023). This illustrates that seeking amicable settlements has deep roots in local tradition, complementing modern ADR frameworks. Conflict is an inherent aspect of social life, occurring naturally among individuals, groups, and communities. As Hadenan et al. (2023) note, societal living inevitably involves negotiations, disagreements, and occasional disputes that require resolution.

In its broadest sense, ADR encompasses a range of practices and techniques that enable disputing parties to reach a mutually acceptable agreement without court adjudication (Mnookin, 1998). From an Islamic perspective, ADR aligns well with Syariah principles, which encourage reconciliation and amicable settlement as preferable alternatives to formal litigation (Hafifi et al., 2019). Widely used ADR methods globally and in Malaysia include mediation, conciliation, adjudication, and arbitration (Cecil, 2017). The *sulh* process, a formal court-annexed mediation, is explicitly incorporated under the Malaysian Syariah Court system as a structured form of ADR (Hafifi et al., 2019).

Prominent Islamic scholars, such as Abu Hasan Din Al-Hafiz, emphasise that disputes and misunderstandings are natural within households and communities (Hadenan et al., 2023). Consequently, disputing parties, particularly husbands and wives, are urged to resolve conflicts swiftly and constructively to preserve family harmony and minimise harm.

At USIM, ADR services through the Legal Clinic reflect this ethos by offering structured mediation and advisory services that aim to resolve disputes efficiently and compassionately. This approach not only reduces the backlog of Syariah court cases but also aligns with the *Maqasid al-Shariah* objective of promoting social harmony, protecting individual dignity (*hifz al-'ird*), and preventing harm (*dar' al-mafasid*). By facilitating peaceful resolutions, the clinic upholds the Islamic principle that reconciliation is preferable to prolonged litigation, thus contributing to a more harmonious and just society.

Proceeding in Syariah Court

The Syariah Court is a judicial institution in Malaysia that plays a significant role in resolving various issues

related to Islamic law, particularly those involving family, marriage, and divorce. This court functions as a legal body that delivers decisions based on Shariah principles, thereby ensuring individual rights in matters of marriage and family. In divorce, the Shariah Court serves as a place for case filing. It provides alternative avenues such as sulh, which allows couples to seek resolution without going through a lengthy and complicated trial (Hasbullah, 2012). The effectiveness lies in implementing the sulh process, where couples are given the chance to discuss with the assistance of a conciliatory officer. Studies have shown that sulh has successfully helped many couples withdraw their decision to divorce after understanding their responsibilities (Zaleha & Nora, 2010).

In addition, the court protects the rights of wives and children, especially in cases of abuse or neglect of maintenance. Women who are abandoned without financial support can claim maintenance and mut'ah through the legal system (Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Malaysia, 2022). The court also serves as an official medium for those seeking fasakh due to physical or emotional abuse, ensuring the safety of the aggrieved party in troubled marriages (Ahmad Hidayat, 2014). However, resolving family conflicts through the court involves high costs. For instance, disputing parties are required to appoint a Syarie Lawyer to represent them in court. As is well known, the cost of hiring a Syarie Lawyer is not cheap. The more complex a case is, the higher the fees the Syarie Lawyer charges. Additionally, if a Syarie Lawyer has been practising for a long time and has an excellent reputation, their professional fees will also be higher. This further complicates the problems the parties face as they are forced to prepare a large sum of money to resolve their disputes (Hafifi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, challenges such as case delays can cause emotional stress to the parties involved. Divorce cases can take months or even years due to human resource constraints and the high volume of cases (Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Malaysia, 2022). Moreover, the lack of public awareness regarding their rights makes it difficult to claim maintenance or child custody, resulting in inadequate protection (Abdul Ghafur, 2009). Another issue is non-compliance with court decisions, such as husbands refusing to pay maintenance even after being ordered to do so. This forces the couple to return to court repeatedly, adding to their emotional and financial burden (Bahagian Sokongan Keluarga, 2021).

The Shariah Court handles household and divorce issues effectively, but weaknesses still need improvement. Therefore, not all marriage and family problem cases can be resolved effectively. This causes some couples to be uninterested and unwilling to recommend using court solutions to resolve family issues.

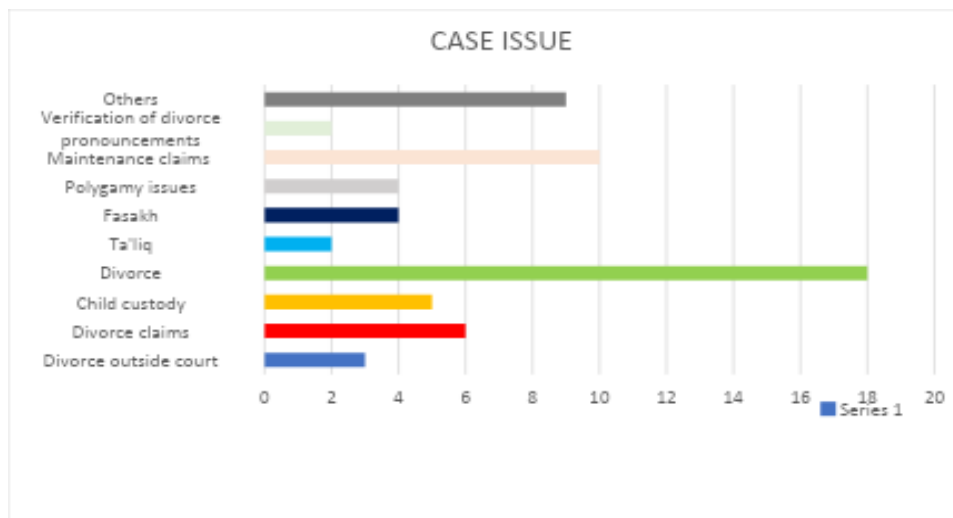
METODOLOGY

To achieve the study's objective, which is to identify the effectiveness of the USIM Legal Clinic, this study employs a qualitative research design using document analysis based on previously conducted cases. Qualitative research refers to studies that use data other than numbers or figures; instead, it involves facts, information, reviews, statements, conceptual meanings, characteristics, symbols, perceptions, and similar elements (Awang, 2001). Document analysis collects data from reading materials such as books, journal articles, conference proceedings, theses, and dissertations. Document analysis aims to uncover the content and meaning contained within the documents (Jasmi, 2012). This approach was chosen because it emphasises understanding the experiences, actions, and perspectives of individuals and institutions involved in the process. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explain that the qualitative approach is highly suitable when the study examines real-life situations, especially when the issues being investigated are complex and contextual, such as divorce cases within the Shariah legal system.

This study's primary data collection method is analysing divorce case data handled by the USIM Legal Clinic within a specific period through e-consultation with clients. The data analysed includes the nature of the case, the applicant's gender, the proposed solutions, and the effectiveness of the e-consultation with clients. These cases were selected based on the issues presented (talaq, fasakh, taklik), clients' backgrounds, and the suggested solutions. This approach aligns with the recommendation of Bowen (2009), who emphasised that data analysis is a valid method in qualitative research as it helps researchers understand processes, structures, and meanings within an institutional context.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case issue analysis



Based on the data obtained, 50 clients have used the e-Consultation services offered by the Legal Clinic of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). From this data, the number of issues raised by the clients who used this service can also be assessed.

From the data obtained, the divorce issues is the highest number of cases which involved with a total of 18 cases, followed by maintenance claims with 10 cases, divorce claims with 6 cases, child custody (hadhanah) issues with 5 cases, fasakh and polygamy issues with 4 cases, divorce outside the court cases with 3 cases, and verification of divorce pronouncements and ta'liq with 2 cases. There were also nine other cases, including inheritance claims, nusyuz (disobedience) claims, requests for divorce from the husband, refusal to divorce, marital problems, implicit divorce pronouncements kinayah, abandoned wives, abuse of wives, and demands for the wife to return to obedience to the husband.

The most dominant and highest, with 18 cases, is a divorce case. These cases involve a variety of forms and reasons, including divorce due to a third party, the husband's attitude, and a lack of mutual understanding. This shows that the divorce rate among the Muslim community remains at an alarming level. It can be more worrying, especially as it often comes from issues that can be avoided if addressed adequately within the household. Divorce statistics in Malaysia show that the number of divorces among Muslim couples is higher compared to non-Muslim couples (Hamid et al., 2021). Therefore, both husband and wife must play an important role and be responsible for maintaining household stability. Failure of either spouse to fulfil their respective roles contributes to conflict and instability in the marriage (Hamid et al., 2021).

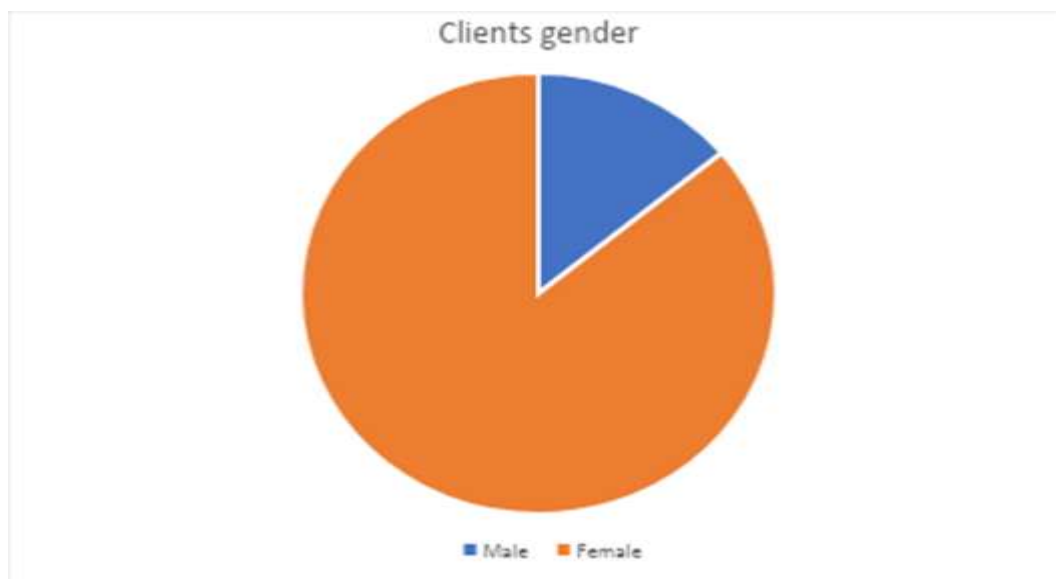
Claims for maintenance have become the second-highest issue, with a total of 10 cases having it as a common problem faced by women during marriage and after divorce. These claims usually involve spousal maintenance, child maintenance, and maintenance during the iddah period. Every woman who is married and holds the status of a wife is entitled to receive maintenance from her husband. (Bahiyah, 2019) Section 59 of the Islamic Family Law Enactment (State of Selangor) 2003 stated that a wife has rights concerning mahar (dowry), gifts, or maintenance provided to or related to her when the marriage is dissolved. We can see that the husband must be responsible for maintaining his wife and children if that right has not been forfeited. However, the data analysis shows that many husbands still fail to fulfil their responsibilities, which leads their wives to bring the matter to the legal level.

This analysis also identifies a category as "others," including nine issues commonly found in marital problems. These include inheritance claims, claims of nusyuz (disobedience), divorce requests by the husband, refusal of divorce by the wife, implicit (kinayah) pronouncements of divorce, internal marital issues, the "hanging without a rope" situation, domestic abuse, and demands for the wife to return to obey to the husband. This clearly shows that marital issues are not solely related to divorce, but involve a wide range of problems and effects, such as

emotional instability and imbalance of responsibilities, which can lead to prolonged physical and mental suffering. “hanging without a rope” refers to a situation where a husband leaves his wife without a valid reason. (Zanariah, 2018) This issue is also considered a serious matter within the marital institution because it involves emotional abuse. Such abuse occurs when the husband abandons the wife, leaving her with the burden of caring for herself and their children, which can profoundly affect the wife’s emotions due to stress. (Zanariah, 2018)

Other cases that were also recorded include six divorce claims, five custody (hadanah) cases, and issues related to the verification of divorce pronouncements. These cases typically arise after a divorce, especially involving child custody rights and the need to verify divorce pronouncements outside the court. This highlights the importance of public understanding of legal procedures and the role of the Shariah Court in confirming any pronouncement or legal claim.

Clients analysis



Based on the data obtained, 50 clients have used the e-Consultation service offered by the Legal Clinic of University Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). From this total, seven were male, while 43 were female.

For male clients, a total of seven individuals used this service. The breakdown by state shows that three were from Selangor, followed by one from Perak, Pulau Pinang, Sabah, and Negeri Sembilan. Meanwhile, for female clients, 43 individuals received legal advice services online. The state breakdown for female clients is as follows: 13 from Selangor, eight from Johor, three each from Pulau Pinang, Negeri Sembilan, Perak, Kuala Lumpur, and Kedah, two from Terengganu, and one each from Pahang, Putrajaya, Kelantan, and Sabah. One female client did not state her state of origin.

The gender imbalance in this data is very apparent, with over 80% of the clients being women. This phenomenon reflects the reality that women are the most affected group in household conflicts, especially in matters related to divorce, alimony claims, child custody rights, and domestic abuse. This data also indicates an increase in women's awareness of their rights in marriage and their courage to seek legal protection and assistance for the well-being of themselves and their children. The dominance of female clients may also be driven by other factors, including higher awareness of access to legal aid, the desire to resolve conflicts legally and professionally, and the convenience of using online platforms. E-Consultation offers a more flexible and safe space, especially for women facing financial, geographical, or social and emotional barriers.

Selangor recorded the highest number of clients, with 16 individuals, 13 women, and three men, followed by Johor, which had eight female clients. This may be attributed to higher levels of awareness among urban populations, better access to technology, and Selangor’s geographical proximity to USIM’s campus in Nilai. According to research, young couples in urban areas are more exposed to household conflicts due to financial stress, social media disturbances, and a lack of quality communication (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia,

2021). Other states such as Perak, Negeri Sembilan, and Pulau Pinang recorded moderate clients, while Kelantan, Putrajaya, Pahang, and Sabah each recorded only one female client. This gap may reflect differences in public awareness, internet accessibility, socioeconomic factors, and local cultural norms that influence an individual's ability and willingness to seek online legal aid.

Overall, these statistics reflect the social reality in Malaysia, which is increasingly exposed to household issues, especially among young couples facing economic pressures and a modern lifestyle. The 10.6% increase in divorce cases compared to the previous year strengthens this finding, indicating that the need for family legal services is becoming more urgent (Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, 2023). Accordingly, e-Consultation services such as those provided by USIM's Legal Clinic were established as a legal advisory medium and an early intervention platform to assist individuals in domestic crises. This medium allows the public to obtain legal guidance and counselling conveniently, quickly, and safely, thereby contributing to the stability of family institutions in the country.

Effectiveness of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) offers a more flexible and amicable approach to resolving disputes without undergoing lengthy and costly litigation. Studies indicate that mediation and Sulh help couples reach harmonious resolutions, reduce emotional stress, and protect children's welfare (Rahmat et al., 2022).

In divorce cases, ADR plays a crucial role in reducing tension between conflicting spouses. Mediation facilitates open and structured communication, allowing couples to discuss child custody, alimony, and asset division more rationally. Research has found that mediation not only accelerates resolution but also minimises psychological impact on children involved in divorce (Bansal, 2024). With a rational mediator, couples can reach agreements without prolonged disputes, preventing unnecessary conflicts. Additionally, ADR provides faster and more cost-effective solutions compared to court trials. Studies show that cases resolved through mediation can be settled within months, whereas court cases may take years (Sonu, 2023). High legal fees often hinder individuals seeking justice, particularly women with limited financial resources. ADR enhances access to justice, ensuring fair resolutions without financial constraints.

Regarding alimony and child custody claims, ADR enables couples to achieve balanced agreements without relying solely on court decisions. This process allows parents to negotiate more flexibly and determine the best solutions for their children. Family mediation expedites resolutions while reducing psychological distress for children (Rahmat et al., 2022). Through guided discussions, parents can ensure their children's well-being remains intact post-divorce, alleviating emotional strain caused by parental conflicts. Beyond legal aspects, ADR incorporates psychological and spiritual factors in dispute resolution. Bansal (2024) highlights that combining psychological counselling and religious values helps individuals make calm and rational decisions. Faith-based reflection before making critical choices allows couples to consider long-term consequences, including their children's future and societal perceptions. This initiative positions ADR not only as a conflict resolution tool but also as an emotional recovery platform for individuals undergoing divorce.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) has proven effective for handling family and divorce conflicts. With its flexible approach, lower costs, and reduced emotional burden, ADR is increasingly relevant as a primary choice for couples facing marital crises. Therefore, awareness and exposure to ADR should be expanded to assist more individuals in finding peaceful and constructive solutions, ensuring the stability of family institutions within society.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

In analysing the findings of this study, it is evident that the legal advice provided is not solely grounded in legal principles but also takes into account the emotional and social aspects of the clients. This approach aligns with the theory of Access to Justice, which emphasises the importance of holistic support for individuals involved in legal disputes (Genn, 1999).

a) Divorce Process and Social Dynamics

Recommendations related to divorce given to clients focus on the proper legal procedures, such as filing for divorce in the Syariah Court and utilising the ‘fast track’ method. This aligns with Islamic family law provisions requiring that divorce proceed through legal channels (Hashim, 2018). A study by Jamal and Mahmud (2021) also states that a systematic divorce process can reduce conflict between spouses, particularly in marriages with a history of domestic tension.

b) Financial Rights and Claims

In maintenance and post-divorce financial claims, lawyers emphasised the importance of documentation such as expenditure receipts and a list of children's needs. This supports the findings of Ramli and Ahmad (2020), who discovered that financial evidence plays a crucial role in ensuring the client's rights in maintenance claims. Furthermore, Saad and Latiff (2022) assert that uncertainty in preparing documentation often causes delays in court proceedings.

c) Child Custody and Best Interests

In cases involving hadhanah (custody) and visitation rights, findings show that the child's best interest forms the basis of every court decision, as stipulated under Section 82, Islamic Family Law Enactment (Selangor) 2003. Zulkifli and Hassan (2021) highlight that a father's involvement in the child's life post-divorce positively impacts the child's psychological well-being.

d) Matrimonial Property and Resolution Mechanisms

Regarding “harta sepencarian” (matrimonial property) claims, lawyers proposed reimbursement or property transfer mechanisms to achieve fair and equitable settlements. This aligns with the study by Zainuddin and Halim (2019), which shows that negotiated settlements can reduce conflict between disputing parties.

e) Spiritual Approach and Emotional Support

One notable finding is the lawyer's role as a counsellor in providing emotional and spiritual support, such as encouraging istikharah prayer and self-reflection before making decisions. This reflects a holistic approach, as Abdullah (2017) suggested, which involves the integration of religious values in resolving Islamic family conflicts.

The study's findings show that legal advisory services focus on legal aspects and include emotional and social support to ensure client well-being. This integrated approach is based on the Access to Justice framework and suits society's increasingly complex needs in dealing with family law issues.

CONCLUSION

The USIM Legal Clinic is vital in providing accessible and holistic support to the public, particularly individuals navigating marital discord and divorce proceedings. In emotionally charged and complex situations, the clinic offers a safe and confidential environment where clients can seek legal advice while receiving psychosocial and motivational guidance. This support is especially crucial for women, who are often disproportionately affected in divorce cases, whether in securing maintenance, asserting child custody rights, or coping with psychological stress (Hassan et al., 2020).

The clinic's commitment to offering affordable or pro bono services, including flexible online consultations, greatly benefits clients who face geographical, time, or financial constraints. This practical outreach embodies the principles of *Maqasid al-Shariah*, specifically the preservation of family well-being, the protection of dignity (*hifz al-'ird*), and the promotion of social justice (Rosidi et al., 2022).

Beyond its immediate community service, the USIM Legal Clinic is a dynamic training ground for law students. It bridges theoretical knowledge and practical application, equipping future legal practitioners with essential skills in client communication, empathy, and ethical dispute resolution. Students gain firsthand experience in

handling cases that require legal acumen, cultural sensitivity, and emotional intelligence, which are indispensable in resolving delicate family matters.

Integrating Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods, such as mediation and *sulh*, further demonstrates the clinic's commitment to fostering amicable solutions outside the courtroom. These approaches often yield faster, more cost-effective outcomes and reduce the emotional burden on couples and their children (Ahmad & Sulaiman, 2019).

In summary, the USIM Legal Clinic is more than a legal advisory centre; it is a crucial institution that empowers the community during times of personal crisis. By embedding *Maqasid al-Shariah* principles into its practice, the clinic addresses legal challenges, reinforces family harmony, uplifts community resilience, and nurtures a new generation of socially responsible legal professionals. Its holistic model exemplifies how contemporary legal aid can meaningfully contribute to the realisation of Islamic legal objectives in modern Malaysia.

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