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Islamic law-based knowledge management framework for divorce mediation in religious courts

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ABSTRACT

This study develops a conceptual knowledge management framework informed by Islamic law to support divorce mediation in Indonesian Religious Courts. It employs qualitative secondary analysis of dissertation findings from five Class IB Religious Courts within the jurisdiction of the Padang Religious High Court, aggregate mediation data for 2020–2024, and literature on knowledge management, organizational learning, digital transformation, and AI governance. Of 18,033 registered divorce cases, 3,065 (17.00%) were recorded as undergoing mediation. Among these mediated cases, 1,504 (49.07%) were unsuccessful, 485 (15.82%) were fully successful, 894 (29.17%) were partially successful, 68 (2.22%) were not conducted, and 114 (3.72%) remained in progress. The findings highlight the need to strengthen knowledge documentation, mediator learning, institutional knowledge sharing, and responsible digital knowledge use. In response, the article proposes six components of the Islamic law-informed knowledge management framework for religious Courts (IKM-RC): knowledge identification and creation; knowledge capture and codification; validation and digital repository; knowledge sharing and organizational learning; AI-assisted knowledge utilization; and evaluation and continuous improvement. The framework integrates ṣulḥ and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as normative orientations, alongside confidentiality, source traceability, accountability, and human oversight. IKM-RC is a conceptual proposal rather than a validated intervention; expert review, prototype development, and empirical evaluation are required before its practical effectiveness can be assessed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mediation of divorce cases in the Religious Court is at the intersection between legal procedures, family conflict resolution, and protection of the rights of the parties. In Indonesia, Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 2016 provides a procedural framework for mediation in court. However, the existence of formal procedures does not in itself guarantee that each process results in substantive dialogue, ongoing agreement or reconciliation. Empirical research on five Class IB Religious Courts within the jurisdiction of the Padang High Court of Religion found that mediation normatively follows the established stages, while its practice also functions as conflict management and resolution due to divorce law [1,2].

Aggregate data from 2020 – 2024 show that the unsuccessful category accounts for the largest share of the outcome of mediation, while the partially successful category also has a substantial proportion. Some agreements may relate to the legal consequences of divorce, children's rights, alimony, or other aspects of the dispute even if reconciliation is not achieved. Therefore, mediation evaluation needs to pay attention to the quality of the process, the protection of rights, and institutional learning, not just the final status of the case.

From the perspective of the legal system, mediation practices are influenced by the interaction of legal substances, institutional structures, and legal culture [3]. From an information systems perspective, this issue also relates to the way knowledge about regulations, mediator experiences, conflict patterns, and settlement practices are documented and reused. Knowledge management includes the creation, storage and retrieval, transfer, and application of knowledge [4]. Meanwhile, organizational learning explains how individual and group insights can be institutionalized into organizational knowledge [5]. Without such mechanisms, mediators' experiences risk remaining individual and difficult to inherit across courts.

Digital transformation is not enough to be understood as the transfer of documents to electronic formats. Transformation requires changes in processes, governance, user capacity, and information utilization to support organizational work [6,7]. Artificial intelligence has the potential to aid in the search and summarization of knowledge, but its use in the legal realm carries the risk of inaccuracies, bias, violations of secrecy, and ambiguity of authority. Guidelines for the use of AI in judicial environments emphasize the need for a responsible approach and human oversight [8,9].

This article proposes the Islamic law-informed knowledge management framework for Religious Courts (IKM-RC) to connect the normative foundations of Islamic law, the professional experience of mediators, organizational learning, and digital infrastructure. The novelty proposed is the contextual integration of knowledge management for divorce mediation in Religious Courts by incorporating the principles of ṣulḥ and maqāṣid al -sharīʿah as normative orientations. The research questions are: (1) what legal, organizational, and knowledge challenges arise in mediation practice; (2) how Islamic legal principles guide the design of knowledge management; and (3) how digital technologies and AI can support the utilization of knowledge without compromising confidentiality, rights of parties, and human accountability.

The specific contribution of IKM-RC lies in its contextual integration of knowledge management processes with Islamic legal orientations and the institutional requirements of divorce mediation. Existing knowledge management models provide general processes for creating, storing, transferring, and applying knowledge, while Islamic family law provides normative considerations concerning reconciliation, welfare, and the protection of rights. IKM-RC brings these dimensions together in a framework tailored to Religious Courts, including the need to distinguish authoritative legal sources from professional experience and AI-generated outputs. Its novelty therefore rests on contextual integration and governance design, rather than on claiming an entirely new general theory of knowledge management. The proposed relationships among empirical challenges, Islamic legal principles, and the six components remain propositions for subsequent validation.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative study based on secondary analysis on the findings of empirical legal research that has been conducted in five Class IB Religious Courts in the jurisdiction of the Padang Religious High Court at Batusangkar, Bukittinggi, Pariaman, Payakumbuh, and Tanjung Pati (Table 1). The main empirical source is the author's dissertation which contains regulatory analysis, mediation documents and reports, as well as the findings of interviews with judges, mediators, and judicial apparatus [2]. This article does not claim to conduct a new field interview; the analysis reinterprets the findings of the dissertation to identify knowledge management needs and formulate a conceptual framework.

Table 1. Divorce cases registered and mediated by Religious Court.

Religious court	Divorce cases registered	Cases mediated	Percentage (%)
Batusangkar	3,347	629	18.79
Bukittinggi	3,594	835	23.23
Pariaman	5,245	545	10.39
Payakumbuh	3,753	671	17.88
Tanjung Pati	2,094	385	18.39
Total	18,033	3,065	17.00

Source: compiled records from five Religious Courts for the 2020 – 2024 period [2].

Quantitative data was taken from the recapitulation of the number of registered divorce cases and the results of mediation for the 2020 – 2024 period based on five courts. The percentage of results was calculated using the denominator of 3,065 cases recorded as undergoing mediation. Data were used descriptively, not to test causal relationships. Qualitative data were synthesized from findings regarding procedures, variations in mediator approaches, internal and external factors, institutional support, and recommendations to strengthen mediation. The validity of the interpretation was limited by the completeness of the documentation in the dissertation and the consistency of the recapitulation of sources.

The analysis was carried out through four stages: (1) resource inventory and examination of aggregate figures; (2) grouping of qualitative findings into procedural themes, mediator capacity, social context, documentation, and evaluation; (3) interpretation using legal system theory, knowledge management, organizational learning, and the principles of ṣulḥ and maqāṣid al -sharīʿah; and (4) mapping of empirical gaps into the six components of IKM-RC. Thematic approaches were used to systematically formulate analytical themes [10]. The resulting framework is a conceptual proposal; the research has not included software development, formal expert validation, or user testing.

The secondary-analysis design places limits on the claims that can be made from the findings. The article does not generate new interviews, observations, or survey data, and its interpretation depends on the scope and documentation of the underlying dissertation and court recapitulations. The empirical material is used to identify knowledge management needs and inform the design of IKM-RC; it is not used to test causal relationships between knowledge management practices and mediation outcomes. The mapping between empirical challenges and framework components is therefore an analytical synthesis, not an empirical validation of the framework. Future research should assess the relevance, feasibility, and adequacy of the proposed components with mediators, Islamic family law experts, and information systems specialists.

From an ethical point of view, mediation data is sensitive. The proposed framework requires minimization of personal data, anonymization of learning materials, restriction of access based on authority, and prohibition of entering the identity of cases into AI services without an adequate basis of authority and protection. AI is positioned as a tool for knowledge search and synthesis, not as a substitute for the consideration of independent mediators or legal sources.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data from five Religious Courts shows that 18,033 divorce cases were registered and 3,065 cases were recorded to be undergoing mediation during 2020 – 2024 (Table 2). Thus, the proportion of mediated cases is 17.00% of registered divorce cases. Based on the court recapitulation, 1,504 cases (49.07%) were unsuccessful, 485 cases (15.82%) were fully successful, 894 cases (29.17%) were partially successful, 68 cases (2.22%) were not implemented, and 114 cases (3.72%) were still in process.

Table 2. Summary of divorce mediation outcomes, 2020 – 2024.

Outcome category	Number of cases	Percentage (%)
Unsuccessful	1,504	49.07
Fully successful	485	15.82
Partially successful	894	29.17
Not conducted	68	2.22
In progress	114	3.72
Total	3,065	100.00

Source: compiled from five Religious Courts [2]. Percentages are calculated from 3,065 mediated cases.

The unsuccessful category represents the largest proportion of mediated cases, while partial success also accounts for a substantial share. When full and partial success are combined as an administrative measure, the total is 1,379 cases, or 44.99% of the 3,065 cases recorded as undergoing mediation. This combined figure should not be interpreted as evidence that all these cases resulted in reconciliation or resumed marital relationships. Partial success may concern particular issues or legal conse-

quences of divorce, but the precise meaning depends on the applicable administrative classification and the substance of each agreement. Aggregate outcome data alone cannot establish the quality of communication, the parties' satisfaction, the airness of the process, or the sustainability of agreements. The results should therefore be interpreted alongside qualitative evidence and the substantive content of mediated agreements [2].

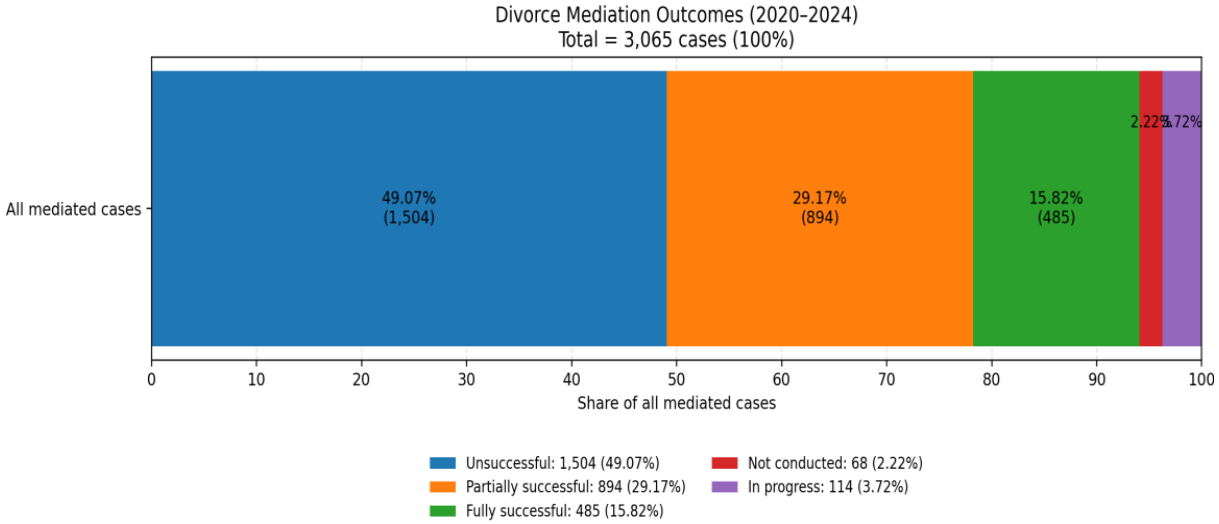


Figure 1. Distribution of divorce mediation outcomes, 2020 – 2024.

Qualitative findings show variations in the depth and approach of mediation (see Figure 1). Some mediators use persuasive communication and interest exploration, while other practices can be brief and tend to be formalistic. Relevant factors include the perception of the parties, psychological conditions, the competence of the mediator, the technical aspects of the trial, legal culture, and institutional support [2]. These findings can be read through legal system theory that emphasizes the interaction of substance, structure, and legal culture [3]. IKM-RC adds a knowledge management perspective: professional experience needs to be documented, reviewed, shared, and used in organizational learning. Practices that are considered beneficial should not be mechanically replicated; documentation needs to include context, boundaries of application, and validation status [5].

For knowledge management, these variations indicate the need to capture professional experience in a structured form and assess its relevance before sharing it across courts. Documentation should record not only the practice or lesson identified, but also its context, source, validation status, and limitations. Knowledge sharing should support peer discussion and institutional learning rather than the automatic replication of individual practices. This approach may help preserve institutional knowledge when personnel change and provide a basis for reviewing practices across courts. However, the proposed benefits expectations remain to be examined through future empirical evaluation.

From the perspective of Islamic law, the principle of ṣulḥ provides an orientation for peaceful dispute resolution, while maqāṣid al-sharīʿah can help direct attention to the welfare, protection of rights, and the interests of the child. The principle should not be simplified into a demand to maintain marriage in all circumstances. The outcome of mediation needs to be assessed based on justice and protection of rights, including when reconciliation is unrealistic or undesirable. The study of mediation in the Islamic family law tradition also demonstrates the relevance of dialogue between religious principles and dispute resolution mechanisms [11]. The context of Minangkabau customs and the involvement of families or local figures can be contextual knowledge, but their use must respect the consent of the parties, safety, and legally protected rights.

Within IKM-RC, Islamic legal principles serve as normative considerations for reviewing and using knowledge, rather than as a presumption that reconciliation is always the preferred outcome. The relevance of ṣulḥ and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah must be considered alongside the circumstances of the parties, protection of rights, and the applicable legal framework. Knowledge of Minangkabau customary practices and family involvement may provide useful social context, but it should not automatically be

treated as a binding norm for every case. Its use must be an account for the parties' consent, safety, power imbalances, and legally protected rights. This distinction allows contextual knowledge to inform mediation without displacing legal obligations or individual agency.

Based on empirical and theoretical synthesis, IKM-RC consists of six components: (1) knowledge identification and creation; (2) capture and code ication; (3) digital validation and repository; (4) knowledge sharing and organizational learning; (5) AI-assisted knowledge utilization; and (6) continuous evaluation and improvement. These components form a cycle, with evaluation providing feedback to identify subsequent knowledge needs. This model adapts the knowledge management process [12] and the idea of creating and institutionalizing organizational knowledge [13].

Each component addresses a distinct knowledge management need identified through the empirical and theoretical synthesis. Knowledge identification and creation help determine which legal, procedural, and experiential knowledge is needed. Capture and codification turn relevant experience into documented material. Validation and the digital repository establish source traceability and distinguish authoritative legal sources from academic interpretations and professional experience. Knowledge sharing and organizational learning support the review and exchange of validated lessons across mediators and courts. AI-assisted utilization may support retrieval and synthesis of authorized material, subject to source verification and human review. Evaluation and continuous improvement provide feedback on the relevance, accuracy, usability, and governance of the knowledge system. These relationships explain the rationale for the six components but do not demonstrate that each component has been independently tested or that the framework improves mediation outcomes. The relationships among the six components and their cross-cutting governance principles are summarized in Figure 2.

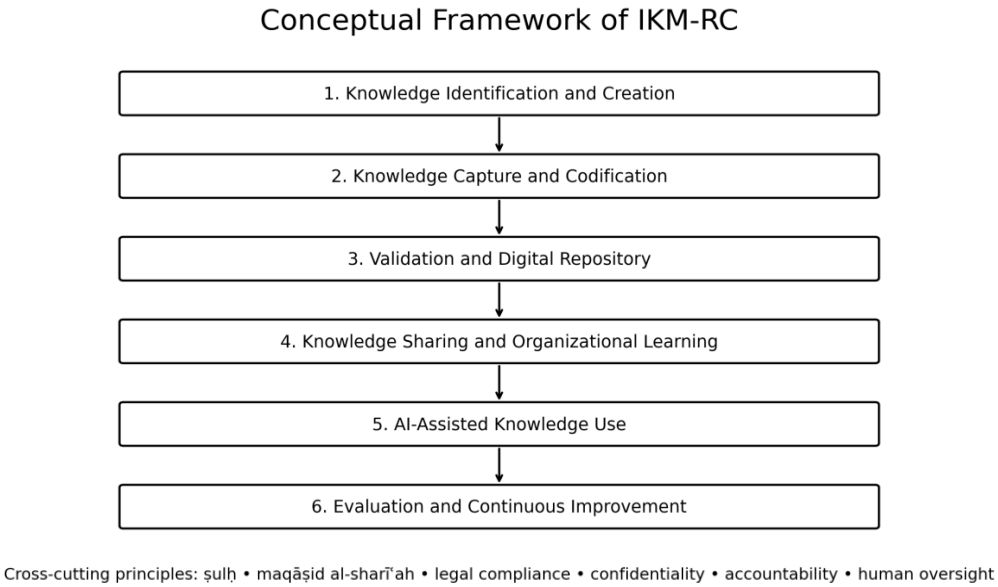


Figure 2. Proposed IKM-RC conceptual framework.

The contribution of IKM-RC is not simply to propose digitalization or the use of AI, but rather to integrate Islamic legal knowledge, mediator experience, organizational learning, and digital technologies in a single contextual framework. The repository should distinguish between positive regulations, Islamic legal sources, academic interpretations, professional guidelines, and practical experience. These distinctions help users assess the status of source authorities and prevent individual experiences from being treated as legal norms.

In practical terms, the proposed repository could organize materials by source type, jurisdiction, topic, date, version, and validation status. Each record should identify its origin and provide sufficient metadata for users to verify whether it remains current and applicable. Access controls should distinguish publicly available legal materials from restricted professional learning records. Any practical lesson derived from mediation should be anonymized, reviewed, and accompanied by a description

of its context and limitations. These arrangements are design recommendations for a future repository; they do not describe a system that has already been implemented.

Digital transformation requires more than the digitization of documents; it demands structuring processes, competencies, and governance [6,7]. AI can aid in the searching, grouping, and summarizing of knowledge, but any output that conveys legal information needs to refer to a source that can be vetted and reviewed by humans. The principles of traceability, confidentiality, purpose limitations, and human oversight are design requirements, in line with AI governance guidance for the judiciary [14]. This framework has not been implemented or tested, so it cannot be claimed to increase the success of mediation.

Operational safeguards should include role-based access, data minimization, anonymization of case-related learning materials, and restrictions on transferring sensitive information to external AI services. AI-generated summaries or legal explanations should be traceable to verifiable sources and reviewed by an authorized human before professional use. The repository should also support correction, version control, and the withdrawal of material found to be inaccurate, outdated, or inappropriate. The specific safeguards must be assessed against applicable legal requirements, institutional policies, and the data practices of any technology provider. Human oversight remains essential because AI output is a support resource, not an independent source of legal authority.

For evaluation, IKM-RC proposes four dimensions: procedural compliance, process quality, protection of rights and the substance of agreements, and institutional learning. Potential indicators include completeness of documentation, participation of parties, traceability of sources, reuse of validated practices, data protection, and repository updates. These indicators are still in the form of a draft and require validation with mediators, Islamic family law experts, and information systems experts.

The proposed dimensions and indicators are preliminary and have not yet been tested for reliability, feasibility, or usefulness in court settings. Their development should involve mediators, Islamic family law experts, information systems specialists, and relevant institutional stakeholders. Evaluation should not rely exclusively on the rate of successful mediation, because such a measure may overlook procedural fairness, protection of rights, and the substance of agreements. Future testing should examine whether the indicators can be applied consistently and whether the proposed repository and knowledge-sharing mechanisms contribute to institutional learning without compromising conflict identity or the parties' interests.

4. CONCLUSION

This study proposes IKM-RC as a knowledge management framework informed by Islamic law to support divorce mediation in Religious Courts. Findings from five Class IB Religious Courts indicate variations in mediation outcomes and practices, alongside the need to strengthen documentation, mediator capacity, organizational learning, and evaluation. Of the 3,065 cases recorded as undergoing mediation during 2020 – 2024, 1,504 (49.07%) were unsuccessful, 485 (15.82%) were fully successful, 894 (29.17%) were partially successful, 68 (2.22%) were not particularly successful, and 114 (3.72%) remained in progress. The combined full and partial success categories account for 1,379 cases (44.99%), but this administrative measure should not be equated with reconciliation or used as a standalone measure of mediation quality.

The article's contribution is the contextual integration of six knowledge management components with the normative orientations of ṣulḥ and maqāṣid al -sharīʿah, supported by principles of responsible digital governance. The proposed repository, knowledge-sharing mechanisms, and AI-assisted functions are intended to support source traceability, professional learning, and institutional knowledge use, not to replace legal authority or human judgment. IKM-RC remains a conceptual framework and has not been validated through expert review, prototype testing, or user evaluation. According to this study does not claim that IKM-RC has improved mediation outcomes. Further research should validate the framework, develop a repository prototype, assess data protection and usability, and examine its contribution to institutional learning and the quality of mediation processes.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Syamsul Bahri: Conceptualization, methodology, literature review, secondary data curation, qualitative analysis, interpretation of mediation data, development of the conceptual framework, visu-

alization, writing—original draft, and writing—review and editing. The author approved the final manuscript and accepts responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the work.

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DECLARATION OF AI USE

The authors declare that no AI tools were used in preparing this manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All data supporting this study are included in the article. No separate datasets are available.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical approval was unnecessary, as no humans or animals were involved.

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