

Reactivating Kinship after Disaster: Functionally Extended Families in Post-Earthquake Lombok

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Abstract

This article examines how disaster reactivates kinship networks and shapes functionally extended family patterns among residents of Kampung Banjar, Mataram, following the 2018 Lombok earthquakes. Drawing on qualitative empirical research based on observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, the analysis traces relational changes before, during, and after the crisis. Kinship is treated as a social practice rather than merely a genealogical tie or a form of co-residence. The findings show that extended-family networks had not disappeared before the earthquakes, but in some families they operated with limited intensity. The disaster functioned as a disruptive moment that altered the relevance of these networks: relatives resumed searching for one another, communicating, gathering, circulating resources, and providing protection and care. These functions could be sustained even when family members continued to live in separate households, making the post-disaster pattern intelligible as a functionally extended family. Yet reactivation did not persist uniformly. In some families, intensified ties were largely situational and declined as everyday routines resumed; in others, crisis-generated practices became more enduring. The article argues that post-disaster family change is better understood through the renewed capacity of kinship networks to work than through household composition or emotional closeness alone across the longer recovery process.

Keywords: *Kinship Reactivation, Functionally Extended Family, Extended Family Networks, Disaster Recovery, Lombok Earthquake.*

Abstrack

Artikel ini menelaah bagaimana bencana mereaktivasi jaringan kekerabatan dan membentuk pola keluarga *functionally extended* pada masyarakat Kampung Banjar, Mataram, setelah gempa Lombok 2018. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif empiris dengan data yang diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Analisis difokuskan pada perubahan relasi sebelum, selama, dan setelah krisis dengan menempatkan kekerabatan sebagai praktik sosial, bukan sekadar hubungan genealogis atau ko-residensi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa sebelum gempa, jaringan keluarga besar tidak hilang, tetapi pada sebagian keluarga bekerja dengan intensitas terbatas. Gempa menjadi *disruptive moment* yang mengubah relevansi jaringan tersebut: kerabat kembali saling mencari, berkomunikasi, berkumpul, menyalurkan sumber daya, dan menjalankan fungsi perlindungan serta perawatan. Fungsi-fungsi ini dapat berlangsung meskipun anggota keluarga tetap tinggal dalam rumah tangga yang berbeda, sehingga pola pascabencana dapat dibaca sebagai keluarga *functionally extended*. Namun, reaktivasi tidak selalu bertahan dengan intensitas yang sama; pada sebagian keluarga ia bersifat situasional, sedangkan pada keluarga lain berkembang menjadi praktik yang lebih menetap. Temuan ini memperlihatkan bahwa daya tahan reaktivasi bergantung pada sejauh mana fungsi yang muncul selama krisis memperoleh tempat dalam rutinitas keluarga setelah keadaan darurat berlalu. Artikel ini berargumen bahwa keluarga pascabencana perlu dipahami melalui kapasitas jaringan kekerabatan untuk kembali bekerja, bukan hanya melalui perubahan komposisi rumah tangga atau peningkatan kedekatan emosional.

Kata kunci: Reaktivasi Kekerabatan, *Functionally Extended Family*, Jaringan Keluarga Besar, Bencana, Gempa Lombok.

A. Introduction

Disasters do more than damage physical space. They unsettle routines, livelihoods, mobility, perceptions of safety, and the networks people ordinarily turn to for help. Under emergency conditions, relationships that had previously remained weak or dormant may become active again and, in some cases, grow stronger even after the immediate crisis has passed.¹ Within these networks, extended family occupies a particularly important place.² Kinship, however, is not defined solely by sharing a household. Family members living apart may still exchange care, information, childcare, assistance, and material resources. Spatial proximity certainly shapes access to support, but distance does not necessarily extinguish the functions that relatives perform for one another.³ When resources become scarce, extended kin may also distribute responsibilities and pool resources across households.⁴

A crisis may alter not only how often people communicate, but also who comes to matter again. Under ordinary conditions, some relationships recede to the margins of everyday life: contact is infrequent, involvement is limited, and encounters occur mainly around particular family occasions. Disaster can unsettle this arrangement with remarkable speed. Jia et al. show that earthquakes can activate social ties that were previously weak or latent, with some of these ties remaining stronger even after the emergency itself has subsided.⁵ This offers a different way of reading post-disaster kinship. Change does not necessarily mean that new relationships are created. It may instead involve older ties becoming socially consequential again after a period of diminished intensity. In this article, I refer to this process as *kinship reactivation*: the renewed activation of kin relations when crisis makes relatives newly relevant as sources of communication, protection, assistance, and a sense of security amid uncertainty.

The 2018 Lombok earthquake sequence provides a particularly revealing setting in which to observe this process. Repeated tremors generated fear, drove residents from their homes, and deepened anxieties about personal and family safety. These concerns were especially acute in Kampung Banjar, a coastal community where rumours of a possible tsunami circulated during the earthquakes. Research on the Lombok disaster has shown that family members and neighbours became central to the communication networks through which affected

¹ Jayson S. Jia et al., “Emergency Communications after Earthquake Reveal Social Network Backbone of Important Ties,” *PNAS Nexus* 2, no. 11 (2023): pgad358, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgad358>; V. Ferreira, L. Sotero, and A. P. Relvas, “Facing the Heat: A Descriptive Review of the Literature on Family and Community Resilience amidst Wildfires and Climate Change,” *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 16, no. 1 (2024): 53–71.

² S. L. Mikucki-Enyart, S. Rose, and J. B. Conrad, “Setting the Agenda: Focusing on Extended Family Relationships,” *Journal of Family Communication* 23, nos. 3–4 (2023): 358–67

³ K. Hagge and D. Schacht, “Variations in Access to Social Support: The Effects of Residential Mobility and Spatial Proximity to Kin and Family,” *Social Indicators Research* 172, no. 1 (2024): 99–120

⁴ A. R. S. Hosany and R. W. Hamilton, “Family Responses to Resource Scarcity,” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 51 (2023): 1351–81.

⁵ Jia et al., “Emergency Communications after Earthquake.”

communities exchanged information and responded to uncertainty.⁶ In Kampung Banjar, Ampenan District, Mataram, however, the pressure of the disaster did more than alter where people sought shelter. It also reshaped whom they contacted, whom they turned to for help, and the place that extended kin once again came to occupy in the texture of everyday life.

This is where the empirical puzzle at the heart of this article begins to take shape. Before the earthquakes, several participants described their relationships with extended family as ordinary, infrequent, or activated mainly around particular occasions, namely weddings, deaths, and other family events. IJ even recalled that some of his children and nieces or nephews barely knew their uncles or relatives from their grandfather's generation.⁷ After the earthquakes, however, this pattern shifted. AU spent roughly two months living together with extended family in Central Lombok;⁸ OI, whose relatives had previously lived in separate households, found himself sharing a single evacuation tent with them;⁹ and DA opened his home as a gathering point where displaced relatives could meet and attend to basic needs.¹⁰ Relationships that had remained relatively unobtrusive in everyday life suddenly mattered when safety, shelter, and basic necessities were at stake. This shift raises a more difficult question: did the disaster merely increase the frequency of family encounters, or did it reactivate kinship functions that had previously operated only intermittently?

Disaster scholarship has more commonly approached social relations through the lenses of social capital, community resilience, psychological support, and collective recovery.¹¹ Partelow, for instance, demonstrates how social capital sustained collective action in the aftermath of the Lombok earthquakes,¹² while Hall and colleagues map the connections among community resilience, social capital, and mental health during public health emergencies and disasters.¹³ At the family level, growing attention has been paid to cohesion and to families' capacity to withstand and recover from disruptive events.¹⁴ Yet Banford Witting and colleagues show that relational approaches to family life in disaster research remain comparatively

⁶ R. Ida et al., "Social Networks and Local Communication Network Patterns Following the Destructive 2018 Lombok, Indonesia, Earthquake Sequence," *Geomatics, Natural Hazards and Risk* 13, no. 1 (2022): 451–73,

⁷ IJ, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

⁸ AU, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

⁹ OI, interview by author, December 6, 2019.

¹⁰ DA, interview by author, December 5, 2019.

¹¹ G. Can Gür, "Shattered Ground, Resilient Souls: Examining Coping Strategies, Social Support, and Earthquake Exposure's Effects on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms among Adolescent and Young Adult Survivors of the 2023 Earthquake in Türkiye," *Current Psychology* 43 (2024): 21745–55

¹² Stefan Partelow, "Social Capital and Community Disaster Resilience: Post-Earthquake Tourism Recovery on Gili Trawangan, Indonesia," *Sustainability Science* 16 (2021): 203–20

¹³ C. E. Hall et al., "Examining the Role of Community Resilience and Social Capital on Mental Health in Public Health Emergency and Disaster Response: A Scoping Review," *BMC Public Health* 23 (2023): 2482,

¹⁴ E. A. Bogdan et al., "Holding Together after Disaster: The Role of Social Skills in Strengthening Family Cohesion and Resilience," *Family Relations* 72, no. 4 (2023): 2194–2214,

underdeveloped and warrant further attention.¹⁵ One question that has received far less sustained consideration is how crisis reactivates extended-family relationships that had become relatively loose, especially when relatives continue to live in separate households. This is the gap the present article addresses. Rather than asking only whether families become more resilient after disaster, it asks how kinship begins to function again and what kind of social form emerges when it does.

To conceptualize this process, this article draws on Lamya' al-Faruqi's notion of the *functionally extended family* within her conception of '*ailah*, which defines extended family not primarily through co-residence but through the sharing of roles, mutual assistance, and interdependence across separate households. This perspective shifts analytical attention from household composition to the relational functions performed by kinship ties, consistent with research showing that geographical distance does not necessarily diminish family support, although its accessibility and intensity may vary.¹⁶ Building on this perspective, the article examines the reactivation of kinship relations among families in Kampung Banjar following the Lombok earthquakes, focusing on how the disaster reactivated previously loose kinship ties and transformed them into a *functionally extended family* pattern through communication, assistance, protection, and interdependence. The article argues that the earthquakes did not create new family bonds but rather reconfigured the practical significance of existing relationships by making kinship networks operational in response to crisis-induced needs and dependencies. Its contribution lies in conceptualizing the post-disaster family not merely as a unit of survival or recovery, but as a relational kinship network that can be reactivated when crises reshape social needs, proximity, and patterns of dependence, thereby connecting disaster studies with a relational understanding of extended family life in everyday social contexts.

B. Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative, empirical approach, with data drawn directly from the social life of the community under study. Fieldwork was conducted in Kampung Banjar, Ampenan District, Mataram, one of the areas affected by the 2018 Lombok earthquakes and a setting in which shifts in family relations became visible in the aftermath of the disaster. Qualitative inquiry places particular value on natural settings and the researcher's engagement with the social world being examined.¹⁷ The researcher therefore served as both the primary research instrument and a participant observer. This position made it possible to interact closely

¹⁵ Alyssa Banford Witting et al., "Natural Disasters and the Relational Study of the Family: A 2-Decade Scoping Review," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 52 (2021): 101990,

¹⁶ Lois Lamya' al-Faruqi, '*Ailah Masa Depan Kaum Wanita*, trans. Masyhur Abadi (Surabaya: Penerbit al-Fikri, 1997).

¹⁷ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 6th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2022).

with residents, observe activities related to family relationships, and spend time alongside several families, allowing a more situated understanding of how kin relations were changing in Kampung Banjar.

The study drew on both primary and secondary data. Primary data came from residents of Kampung Banjar, particularly oral accounts provided by members of several families, alongside observations of activities, behaviours, and attitudes that revealed the dynamics of family relationships. In presenting the findings, participants are identified by initials, following the convention used consistently throughout the interview material. Secondary sources were used to complement the field evidence and place it within a broader interpretive context. These included books, journal articles, research reports, official documents, and other written materials concerning the Lombok earthquakes, transformations in family relations, and Lamya' al-Faruqi's thinking on *'ailah*. The experiences of community members thus remain the empirical centre of the study; the literature serves to contextualise, sharpen, and bring those experiences into conversation with wider scholarly debates.

Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to capture community activities and situations in which changing family relations could be seen as they unfolded. Semi-structured interviews provided the principal route into residents' accounts of these changes. The questions were purposeful but not rigid: when participants raised an issue that required clarification or seemed worth pursuing further, the conversation was allowed to follow it, a flexibility central to qualitative interviewing.¹⁸ Documentation supplemented these encounters through personal notes, video recordings, photographs, and other relevant records. In this study, such materials were used particularly to substantiate evidence of earthquake damage to homes and to document indications that family relationships had become more closely connected. Taken together, these three forms of data collection allowed experiences, practices, and shifts in kin relations to be examined through more than a single evidentiary lens and against the field traces accumulated over the course of the research.

Data analysis followed the stages employed in the original study: *editing*, classification, verification, and analysis. During the *editing* stage, the material was reviewed for completeness, clarity, legibility, relevance, and overall suitability; it was then grouped so that emerging patterns could be read more readily. Verification involved returning to the classified material and cross-checking information to minimise the risk of misinterpreting participants' accounts. The analytical stage, in turn, was used to unpack the findings and relate them to Lamya' al-

¹⁸ Weng Marc Lim, "What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines," *Australasian Marketing Journal* 33, no. 2 (2025): 199–229, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264619>

Faruqi's concept of '*ailah*'. The credibility of the data was strengthened through source triangulation, particularly by comparing accounts across participants.¹⁹ For the purposes of this article, the same empirical material has been reorganised around a more specific set of concerns: the condition of kin relations before the earthquakes, the mobilisation of relatives during the crisis, the functions performed by extended family, and whether these relationships endured or loosened again once the emergency had subsided. This reorganisation introduces no new empirical data. Rather, it sharpens the analytical focus in line with the questions posed here and the article's central argument.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Kin Relations before the Disaster: Between Closeness and Looseness

Before the 2018 Lombok earthquakes, extended-family relations in Kampung Banjar did not follow a single pattern. Some families maintained a degree of closeness through regular gatherings and relatively steady communication, while others interacted only when necessary and, in some cases, had grown noticeably distant. This variation matters because it prevents the pre-disaster condition of kinship from being reduced to a simple story of uniform decline. What emerges instead is a continuum: at one end were relationships sustained through fairly regular contact; at the other were ties that surfaced mainly on particular occasions. Extended family, in other words, remained part of the social architecture of everyday life, but the degree of involvement, frequency of encounter, and intensity of communication varied considerably before the disaster disrupted these established rhythms.

For some families, kinship before the earthquakes was distinctly episodic. AU still visited members of his extended family, but only two or three times a month, and the visits themselves were usually brief.²⁰ AM recalled that family members rarely checked on one another; communication tended to become more active only around events considered important, such as weddings, births, or deaths.²¹ YU described a similar pattern, with contact occurring more often when there was particular family news to exchange.²² MA, meanwhile, characterised relations with the wider family as relatively loose. Communication had not disappeared, but it was infrequent, and encounters with relatives in Bima were further constrained by distance.²³ These relationships were

¹⁹ Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*.

²⁰ AU, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

²¹ AM, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

²² YU, interview by author, December 5, 2019.

²³ MA, interview by author, December 7, 2019.

therefore not severed. They endured, but they had yet to function as a kin network that was consistently present, perceptible, and active in the texture of everyday life.

In DA's family, looseness was not primarily a consequence of physical distance. Many relatives lived nearby, some within the same neighbourhood, yet much of their communication took place through a family WhatsApp group, while face-to-face encounters were concentrated around the monthly *arisan*.²⁴ IJ's account reveals a deeper layer of relational thinning. Infrequent meetings and limited communication meant that some children, nieces and nephews, and younger family members barely knew their uncles or relatives from their grandfather's generation. Family encounters tended to occur only during *Maulid* celebrations, weddings, or funerals.²⁵ Here, looseness in kinship was no longer simply a matter of how often people met. It had begun to affect intergenerational recognition itself. Genealogical ties remained intact, but the opportunities through which younger family members might recognise, engage with, and grow familiar with their wider kin had become increasingly scarce in everyday life.

Not every family entered the disaster with already loosened ties. AG, for instance, continued to sustain family connections through a monthly *yasinan* gathering, while relatives living outside Lombok remained in contact by telephone and video call.²⁶ A similar pattern can be seen in UM's family. She continued to communicate with siblings living in Sumbawa and Labuan Lombok, while ties with her husband's family were also maintained.²⁷ These cases complicate any suggestion that pre-earthquake kinship in Kampung Banjar was uniformly weak. Some relationships had indeed become less intensive, but others remained alive through recurring communication, religious gatherings, and ordinary practices of staying in touch.

What had weakened in some families, then, was not kinship as a genealogical bond, but the practices that made kinship socially present: talking, meeting, checking on one another, and remaining involved in relatives' lives. The ties themselves endured, though they did not always operate with the same intensity. It is precisely here that the idea of *reactivation* finds its empirical footing. Reactivation does not mean the creation of new relationships. It refers instead to existing ties becoming consequential again when circumstances draw them back into everyday life a pattern also observed in research on

²⁴ DA, interview by author, December 5, 2019.

²⁵ IJ, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

²⁶ AG, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

²⁷ UM, interview by author, December 6, 2019.

social networks following earthquakes, where previously weak or latent ties can become newly active under crisis conditions.²⁸

2. The Earthquake as a Turning Point: Reactivating Kinship Networks

The 2018 Lombok earthquakes disrupted something more immediate than physical space: they unsettled residents' sense of safety in Kampung Banjar. Repeated tremors, fears of aftershocks, and circulating rumours of a tsunami meant that home could no longer be taken for granted as a reliably safe place. Under such conditions, decisions about whether to stay, move, or seek refuge became part of an everyday life marked by uncertainty. This pressure matters not merely as the background against which family change occurred. It altered how people evaluated proximity to others and whom they regarded as necessary in moments of danger. Once safety became a shared concern, relationships that had rarely been activated in ordinary times acquired a new practical significance. Relatives were sought out, contacted, and increasingly drawn back into the ways families navigated threat.

For AU, the search for safety took the family back to Central Lombok. There, AU and the extended family gathered and lived under one roof for roughly two months—an intensity of togetherness that had been largely absent before the earthquakes, when family visits were relatively brief and infrequent.²⁹ MA's experience followed a similar trajectory, though in a different form. As fears of a tsunami deepened the sense of danger, MA evacuated to Bima, where members of the extended family lived. Contact with relatives became far more intensive there, while financial assistance and a tarpaulin for shelter also came through the family network.³⁰ In both cases, movement toward a place perceived as safer also narrowed a social distance that had previously been felt in everyday life. Kin were no longer simply another geographical destination. They became a place of recourse when one's own home could no longer offer the same sense of security.³¹

Evacuation sites likewise created forms of encounter that ordinary life had rarely afforded. OI, who had described family relations before the earthquakes as not particularly close, found himself sharing a single evacuation tent with members of his extended family after the disaster.³² JA experienced something similar. His family and other relatives from Kampung Banjar and surrounding areas gathered at the same

²⁸ Jia et al., "Emergency Communications after Earthquake."

²⁹ AU, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

³⁰ MA, interview by author, December 7, 2019.

³¹ H. M. Williams, "We Get By with Family: Maternal Partnership Transitions and Extended Kin Coresidence," *Family Relations* 72, no. 5 (2023): 2353–70, <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12883>

³² OI, interview by author, December 6, 2019.

evacuation site, creating far more opportunities to talk, joke, and spend time together than had existed before.³³ Their spatial proximity was temporary, but its effects were not entirely so. Evacuation brought relatives who had previously inhabited separate households into an unusually concentrated period of shared life. In that compressed social space, communication began to shift from the mere existence of a family tie toward the active practice of that relationship once again.

Encounters forged in evacuation gradually developed into more active forms of communication and care. IJ recalled that concern for family members' safety prompted relatives to call one another, search for those whose whereabouts were uncertain, and quickly visit kin whose homes had been damaged or who had been injured.³⁴ Temporary relocation to an extended-family home also created intergenerational encounters that had seldom occurred before; children and younger relatives began to recognise uncles and other kin who had previously seemed distant. AG's experience reveals another side of the same shift. His family ties had already been maintained before the earthquakes, yet communication became markedly more intense afterward as relatives living outside Lombok repeatedly sought news about those affected.³⁵ Reactivation, then, did not always begin with relationships that had become genuinely distant. Even where ties had remained intact, crisis could deepen attentiveness and make the presence of kin more palpable in everyday life.

The pattern observed in Kampung Banjar resonates with broader findings on social networks under disaster conditions.³⁶ Jia and colleagues show that earthquakes can activate ties that had previously been weak or latent, with some subsequently developing into stronger relationships.³⁷ In post-earthquake Nepal, Panday and colleagues likewise found that social ties facilitated collective action, rescue, and forms of mutual support.³⁸ Evidence from Lombok itself demonstrates how social capital can provide critical resources for collective action and community recovery.³⁹ These studies help illuminate what happened in Kampung Banjar. Relationships that appeared peripheral under ordinary circumstances could acquire new weight once danger entered everyday life. Kin

³³ JA, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

³⁴ IJ, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

³⁵ AG, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

³⁶ I. L. Ómarsdóttir, G. Pétursdóttir, D. K. Bird, and G. Gísladóttir, "Community Resilience through the Lens of Social Support: Recovering from the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull Eruption in Iceland," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 81 (2022): 103272, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2022.103272>

³⁷ Jia et al., "Emergency Communications after Earthquake."

³⁸ S. Panday, S. Rushton, J. Karki, J. Balen, and A. J. E. Barnes, "The Role of Social Capital in Disaster Resilience in Remote Communities after the 2015 Nepal Earthquake," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 55 (2021): 102112, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2021.102112>

³⁹ Partelow, "Social Capital and Community Disaster Resilience," 203–20.

mattered not simply because of emotional closeness, but because family networks could carry information, provide shelter, extend care, and channel assistance when the capacity of an individual household had been disrupted.⁴⁰

The earthquakes, therefore, should not be understood as having somehow created the extended family. Kinship long predated the disaster; what changed was its relevance and intensity. The loss of security pushed residents to seek safer ground, and for some, that movement led directly back toward relatives. Spatial closeness in evacuation settings multiplied opportunities for encounter, while fear and uncertainty revived communication and attentiveness. In this sense, the earthquakes operated as a *disruptive moment*: they drew kinship networks from the margins of everyday life toward its centre. Reactivation occurred when genealogical ties once again acquired practical as well as emotional force. The question that follows, however, is more demanding: what, precisely, did these extended-family networks begin to do, and how did those renewed functions come to resemble a *functionally extended* family? The next section turns to that question through the post-disaster experiences of families in Kampung Banjar.

3. When Kinship Works Again: Toward a *Functionally Extended* Family

The increase in family encounters after the earthquakes does not, by itself, explain what changed among families in Kampung Banjar. More revealing is what relatives began to do for one another once the crisis drew them back into closer contact. Communication became more than an exchange of greetings; assistance was no longer simply an occasional act of generosity; and togetherness meant more than occupying the same physical space. Relatives began seeking news of one another, offering help, providing safer places to stay, and stepping into roles when other family members needed support.⁴¹ At this point, kinship regained its capacity to work. It was no longer present merely as a genealogical connection, but as a network through which care, resources, protection, and responsibility could move when ordinary arrangements had become fragile.

The earliest shift was visible in communication. AG recalled that family relations became markedly more intensive after the earthquakes. Relatives living outside Lombok repeatedly contacted those on the island, anxious to know whether family members were safe.⁴² For AM, communication that had previously surfaced mainly around particular needs or occasions turned into almost daily exchanges about relatives' conditions, the

⁴⁰ F. Shang, S. Cowlshaw, K. Kaniasty, H. Ma, and D. Forbes, "Disaster Survivors' Perceptions of Received Social Support: Outcome, Delivery, and Provider All Matter," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 69 (2022): 102761, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2021.102761>

⁴¹ D. W. Lee, "The Effects of Social Support on Disaster Resilience: Focusing on Disaster Victims," *International Journal of Public Administration* 47, no. 2 (2024): 106–16.

⁴² AG, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

availability of water, and necessities that remained unmet.⁴³ In circumstances such as these, asking after someone was no longer a social courtesy. Communication became a way of establishing who was safe, who needed help, and what needed to be done next. Kin could therefore become present through voices, messages, and sustained attention, even when relatives were not physically gathered in the same place. Presence, in other words, was no longer reducible to proximity.

Concern then moved beyond words and into action. IJ recalled how anxiety over relatives' safety prompted family members to search for one another and quickly visit those whose homes had collapsed or who had been injured. The encounters generated during the earthquake period also brought together relatives who had rarely met before and, in some cases, scarcely knew one another.⁴⁴ In AM's family, concern took a different but equally practical form: relatives asked what was most urgently needed and sent assistance when family members lacked water or other necessities.⁴⁵ Empathy, then, did not remain a private feeling of worry. It acquired a social form when people went looking for relatives, visited them, made contact, or stepped in with concrete assistance. It was through such ordinary yet consequential acts that care became one of the ways kinship regained practical force amid the uncertainties of post-disaster life.

Kinship also worked through the movement of resources. In AM's family, conversations about post-earthquake conditions quickly turned to practical questions: Was there enough water? Who was running short? What kind of help needed to be sent? When relatives lacked basic necessities, other family members tried either to deliver what was needed or to find a way of obtaining it.⁴⁶ MA received support in another form. Relatives provided money and a tarpaulin, both of which became useful during the period of displacement.⁴⁷ Water, cash, and temporary shelter may appear to be ordinary material needs, yet their circulation points to something more fundamental. The extended family became a channel through which resources moved from those who were able to provide them to those facing immediate shortage. This pattern echoes Hosany and Hamilton's observation that families respond to resource scarcity through shared adjustment and reliance on support networks.⁴⁸ In Kampung Banjar, kinship helped ensure that scarcity was not borne by a single household alone.

⁴³ AM, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

⁴⁴ IJ, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

⁴⁵ AM, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

⁴⁶ AM, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

⁴⁷ MA, interview by author, December 7, 2019.

⁴⁸ Hosany and Hamilton, "Family Responses to Resource Scarcity," 1351–81.

Another function that became more pronounced was protection and care. DA's experience makes this especially tangible. Because his house stood close to the field used as an evacuation area, it became a gathering place for relatives as well as a space where displaced family members could bathe and meet basic needs during the emergency.⁴⁹ Yet DA's concern extended beyond opening his home. He was deeply worried about his grandmother, who was paralysed, and when the earthquake struck he asked his eldest child to go immediately and make sure that she had been taken out of her room and brought to safety. Once this had been confirmed, the child returned with news for the rest of the family. Protection within the extended family, then, was hardly an abstract principle. It took shape through bodies in motion, doors opened to others, and responsibilities passed across generations. In a moment of danger, those who were able to act stepped forward for relatives who were less able to protect themselves.

Although evacuation temporarily brought relatives into the same physical space, such togetherness did not necessarily lead to the formation of a permanent shared household. In several cases, co-residence arose out of emergency need; once conditions improved, family members resumed life in their respective homes. What mattered more were the functions that had been reactivated in the process: communication, attentiveness, assistance, protection, and a willingness to assume responsibility for other relatives. Residential distance, therefore, did not in itself erase a family's capacity to provide support, as Hagge and Schacht have also shown.⁵⁰ It is at this point that the analysis of Kampung Banjar begins to move away from the question of who lives with whom and toward a more substantive one: how can an extended family continue to function when its members remain dispersed across separate households?

It is at this point that Lamya' al-Faruqi's concept of the *functionally extended* family becomes particularly useful. Al-Faruqi distinguishes between an extended family whose members live together and one that continues to perform shared functions even while its members reside apart. In the *functionally extended* form, what holds the family together is not primarily a common roof, but the continuing circulation of roles and interdependence among relatives.⁵¹ This pattern is visible in the experiences of families in Kampung Banjar. Family members did not all remain together once the period of evacuation had passed, yet they could continue to contact one another, send assistance, provide protection, and assume responsibility when relatives needed support. Such

⁴⁹ DA, interview by author, December 5, 2019.

⁵⁰ Hagge and Schacht, "Variations in Access to Social Support," 99–120.

⁵¹ Al-Faruqi, *Ailah Masa Depan Kaum Wanita*.

exchanges are consistent with contemporary research showing that extended-family networks can remain important sites for giving and receiving support beyond the boundaries of a single household.⁵² Hagge and Schacht similarly demonstrate that family support can operate across residential distance, even as proximity shapes its accessibility and intensity.⁵³ Kinship functions, in other words, do not necessarily cease when relatives establish separate households and inhabit different social and physical spaces.

This reading shifts the analytical focus from household form to the capacity of kinship to work. What was reconstructed in Kampung Banjar after the earthquakes was not an extended family gathered permanently under one roof, but a network that once again carried communication, material assistance, protection, and shared responsibility. Because these functions could operate while relatives continued to live separately, the emerging pattern can be understood as a *functionally extended* family. Yet reactivation should not be mistaken for permanence. In some families, the renewed closeness endured; in others, relational intensity began to recede as everyday life returned to a more familiar rhythm. This variation matters. It allows us to ask not simply whether kinship became active during crisis, but whether the relationships and functions reawakened under extraordinary circumstances could find a lasting place in ordinary family life once the disaster itself had passed.

4. After the Crisis: The Durability of Kinship Reactivation

The heightened intensity of family relations during disaster does not necessarily signal lasting change.⁵⁴ Once the immediate threat recedes, people return to work, households rebuild their routines, and the temporary spaces that brought relatives together begin to disappear. It is at this stage that kinship reactivation faces its real test. Do the communication, attentiveness, and involvement that intensified during crisis remain part of family life, or do those relationships drift back toward the looser patterns that characterised the period before the earthquakes, becoming less visible again in everyday experience?

AM's experience suggests that some forms of reactivation were indeed situational. During the earthquakes, communication within the family became much more frequent; relatives checked on one another, asked about access to water, and discussed what kind of assistance was needed. Yet once conditions felt safer and family members returned to

⁵² R. J. Taylor, X. Xiang, A. W. Nguyen, and W. Qin, "Extended Family Relationships among Older African American, Black Caribbean, and White Adults," *Family Relations* 74, no. 5 (2025): 2998–3016

⁵³ Hagge and Schacht, "Variations in Access to Social Support," 99–120.

⁵⁴ L. Stribley et al., "Post-Disaster Social Connectedness in Parent–Child Dyads: A Qualitative Investigation of Changes in Coping and Social Capital of Rural Australian Families Following Bushfires," *British Journal of Social Work* 55, no. 1 (2025): 5–24, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcae123>.

work, that intensity began to decline.⁵⁵ YU described a somewhat different trajectory. Contact with relatives, including those living outside the city, continued after the earthquakes, but no longer with the same frequency that had characterised the crisis period.⁵⁶ Together, these accounts show that closeness generated under emergency conditions can have different temporal lives. The need to establish who was safe made relationships intensely active, but as that need diminished, some of the communicative intensity receded with it. Reactivation, therefore, does not always consolidate into a permanent relational pattern. In some families, it rises and falls with the pressures created by crisis, later adjusting once again to the demands of work and everyday routines—a heterogeneity also evident in longitudinal research on post-disaster social support and recovery.⁵⁷

IJ's experience offers a striking contrast. After the period of searching for relatives, gathering together, and becoming reacquainted with kin during the earthquakes, family relations did not simply return to their earlier form. IJ explained that the family subsequently began holding a monthly *arisan*, and that relations among relatives remained more harmonious than they had been before the disaster.⁵⁸ Here, crisis left behind something more durable: a new social habit. Encounters that initially arose because of danger were given a more regular setting once conditions improved. Reactivation, in this case, did not end with the emergency. It entered the ordinary rhythm of family life and acquired a social form that could be maintained after the crisis had passed.

The contrast between AM–YU and IJ–UM suggests that the durability of reactivation cannot be explained simply by the intensity of the crisis itself.⁵⁹ In UM's case, relations with the extended family became noticeably closer after the earthquakes; several of her own siblings and relatives from her husband's side subsequently came to live with her.⁶⁰ Read alongside IJ's experience, this suggests that, for some families, closeness forged under emergency conditions acquired a more tangible form once the crisis had passed: regular gatherings emerged, some relatives continued to share living space, and communication remained part of everyday family life. AM and YU point in

⁵⁵ AM, interview by author, December 4, 2019.

⁵⁶ YU, interview by author, December 5, 2019.

⁵⁷ J. Lam and A. Li, "Effects of Climate-Related Disasters on Loneliness, Social Support, Social Functioning, and Social Contacts: Longitudinal Analyses of Impact and Recovery," *Scientific Reports* 15 (2025): 10799,

⁵⁸ IJ, interview by author, December 8, 2019.

⁵⁹ G. Sou, "A Place-Based Framework to Understand Family Disaster Recovery," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 132 (2026): 105962, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2025.105962>

⁶⁰ UM, interview by author, December 6, 2019.

another direction. As emergency needs receded, the intensity of communication also diminished. This article does not treat these differences as causal relationships explicitly identified by the participants themselves. Rather, the pattern in the data suggests that reactivation may be more likely to endure when the functions awakened during crisis find a place in post-disaster routines. Such uneven trajectories echo Bogdan and colleagues' finding that disaster does not move all families in the same direction: some grow closer, others do not, while communication practices and the ways families manage stress are closely tied to post-disaster cohesion.⁶¹

Reactivation, then, needs to be distinguished from *persistence*. The earthquakes created conditions in which kinship could become active again, but they did not guarantee that this heightened intensity would survive the return to ordinary life. In some families, relationships gradually settled back into rhythms resembling those of the pre-disaster period. In others, the crisis left behind new practices that continued to keep kin relations alive. Research on family and community resilience similarly cautions against treating recovery as a single, uniform trajectory: disaster may be followed by shifts in behaviour, priorities, and relationships that unfold differently over time.⁶² The post-emergency period therefore matters as much as the crisis itself. In Kampung Banjar, the durability of reactivation appears to rest on whether communication, encounters, assistance, and interdependence generated during the earthquakes were able to find a continuing place within the ordinary routines of family life.

D. Conclusion

Before the 2018 Lombok earthquakes, extended-family networks in Kampung Banjar had never entirely disappeared. Genealogical ties remained in place, but in some families the practices that sustained kinship had become relatively thin: communication was irregular, encounters depended on particular occasions, and involvement in relatives' lives was not always part of everyday experience. In other families, these ties remained more actively maintained through regular contact and family gatherings. The earthquakes altered the relevance of these networks. Once home no longer guaranteed a sense of safety and personal security became an immediate concern, relatives were sought out, contacted, visited, and turned to for shelter. The disaster, then, did not create new family relationships. It reactivated ties that already existed, though with different levels of prior intensity and involvement.

The most significant change was not simply a rise in emotional closeness among relatives. More fundamentally, kinship regained its capacity to work. Communication became a means

⁶¹ Bogdan et al., "Holding Together after Disaster," 2194–2214.

⁶² Ferreira, Sotero, and Relvas, "Facing the Heat," 53–71.

of establishing safety; concern developed into the acts of searching for and visiting relatives; water, money, shelter, and other necessities circulated through family networks; and protection and care were provided when relatives assumed responsibility for those who were more vulnerable. None of these functions necessarily required permanent co-residence. Precisely because communication, assistance, protection, and interdependence could operate among relatives living in separate households, the post-earthquake pattern in Kampung Banjar can be understood through the idea of the *functionally extended* family. Yet reactivation was not the same as persistence. Once the emergency receded, some relationships again became less intensive as work and everyday routines resumed, while in other families the crisis left behind more durable practices—regular gatherings, sustained communication, or continued shared living arrangements. The earthquakes therefore opened a space for kinship reactivation, but they did not ensure that every relationship would endure with the same intensity.

These findings suggest that post-disaster family life needs to be read beyond changes in household composition or the simple question of whether relatives became “closer.” Equally important is whether kin networks regain the capacity to provide attention, information, material resources, protection, and shared responsibility when ordinary life is disrupted. This perspective treats the extended family as a relational network that may loosen, become reactivated, and then either endure or recede again as the crisis passes. Reading recovery through the capacity of kinship networks to work therefore offers a way of bringing disaster studies and family studies into closer conversation. Future research could extend this argument longitudinally, asking how long the functions activated during emergency continue to matter once the disaster itself has receded further into the background of everyday life.

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